

 Harlequin®

*Desire*

NEW YORK TIMES AND USA TODAY  
BESTSELLING AUTHOR

# BRENDA JACKSON

A WIFE FOR A  
WESTMORELAND



**W**



**Praise for *New York Times* and *USA TODAY* bestselling author Brenda Jackson**

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“Brenda Jackson writes romance that sizzles and characters you fall in love with.”

—*New York Times* and *USA TODAY* bestselling author Lori Foster

“Jackson’s trademark ability to weave multiple characters and side stories together makes shocking truths all the more exciting.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

“Jackson’s characters are wonderful, strong, colorful and hot enough to burn the pages.”

—*RT Book Reviews on Westmoreland’s Way*

“The kind of sizzling, heart-tugging story Brenda Jackson is famous for.”

—*RT Book Reviews on Spencer’s Forbidden Passion*

“This is entertainment at its best.”

—*RT Book Reviews on Star of His Heart*



Dear Reader,

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It's hard to believe that *A Wife for a Westmoreland* is the nineteenth book in The Westmorelands series and the fourth book about the Denver Westmorelands. Time sure flies when you're having fun, and I've really had a ball bringing you stories about such gorgeous men and women.

I knew Derringer Westmoreland was going to be a challenge when he appeared on the scene in *Hot Westmoreland Nights*. Besides being a man too handsome for his own good and a man used to playing the field, he's ruggedly seductive and can talk the panties off any woman. He's also a man who believes in getting whatever it is that he wants, no matter what it takes to get it, and he's decided he wants Lucia Conyers. That would be all fine and dandy for Lucia, since she's loved Derringer most of her life, but she wants him to want her for all the right reasons and refuses to settle for anything less. So what does this Westmoreland man have to do to get the woman he wants? I think you're going to enjoy the results.

All the best,

Brenda Jackson



**BRENDA JACKSON**

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**A WIFE FOR A WESTMORELAND**

 Harlequin®  
*Desire*





To Gerald Jackson, Sr. My one and only.

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To all my readers who are joining me  
on the Madaris/Westmoreland Cruise 2011 this month.  
Thanks for making it special and this book is especially for you!

To my Heavenly Father. How Great Thou Art.

Better a meal of vegetables where there is love  
than a fattened calf with hatred.

—*Proverbs 15:17*



## Books by Brenda Jackson

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### Desire

- \* *Delaney's Desert Sheikh* #1473
- \* *A Little Dare* #1533
- \* *Thorn's Challenge* #1552
- \* *Stone Cold Surrender* #1601
- \* *Riding the Storm* #1625
- \* *Jared's Counterfeit Fiancée* #1654
- \* *The Chase Is On* #1690
- \* *The Durango Affair* #1727
- \* *Ian's Ultimate Gamble* #1756
- \* *Seduction, Westmoreland Style* #1778
- \* *Spencer's Forbidden Passion* #1838
- \* *Taming Clint Westmoreland* #1850
- \* *Cole's Red-Hot Pursuit* #1874
- \* *Quade's Babies* #1911
- \* *Tall, Dark...Westmoreland!* #1928
- \* *Westmoreland's Way* #1975
- \* *Hot Westmoreland Nights* #2000
- \* *What a Westmoreland Wants* #2035
- \* *A Wife for a Westmoreland* #2077

### Kimani Arabesque

- <sup>1</sup> *Whispered Promises*
- <sup>1</sup> *Eternally Yours*
- <sup>1</sup> *One Special Moment*
- <sup>1</sup> *Fire and Desire*
- <sup>1</sup> *Secret Love*
- <sup>1</sup> *True Love*
- <sup>1</sup> *Surrender*
- <sup>1</sup> *Sensual Confessions*

### Kimani Romance

- \*\* *Solid Soul* #1
- \*\* *Night Heat* #9
- \*\* *Beyond Temptation* #25
- \*\* *Risky Pleasures* #37
- \*\* *Irresistible Forces* #89
- \*\* *Intimate Seduction* #145





## **BRENDA JACKSON**

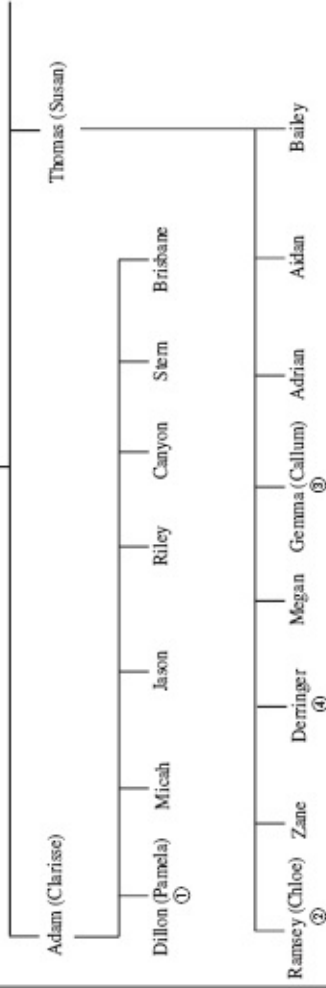
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is a die “heart” romantic who married her childhood sweetheart and still proudly wears the “going steady” ring he gave her when she was fifteen. Because she’s always believed in the power of love, Brenda’s stories always have happy endings. In her real-life love story, Brenda and her husband of thirty-eight years live in Jacksonville, Florida, and have two sons.

A *New York Times* bestselling author of more than seventy-five romance titles, Brenda is a recent retiree who now divides her time between family, writing and traveling with Gerald. You may write Brenda at P.O. Box 28267, Jacksonville, Florida 32226, by email at [WriterBJackson@aol.com](mailto:WriterBJackson@aol.com) or visit her website at [www.brendajackson.net](http://www.brendajackson.net).

## THE DENVER WESTMORELAND FAMILY TREE

Raphel and Gemma Westmoreland  
Stern Westmoreland (Paula Bailey)



① *Westmoreland's Way*

② *Hot Westmoreland Nights*

③ *What a Westmoreland Winter*

④ *A Wife for a Westmoreland*





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Lucia Conyers's heart was beating like crazy as she made a sharp turn around the curve while the wheels of her SUV barely gripped the road. She knew she should slow down, but couldn't. The moment she'd heard that Derringer Westmoreland had been taken to the emergency room due to an injury he sustained after being thrown from a horse, a part of her had nearly died inside.

It didn't matter that most of the time Derringer acted as though he didn't know she existed or that he had a reputation in Denver as a ladies' man—although she doubted the women he messed around with could really be classified as ladies. Derringer was one of Denver's heartthrobs, a hottie if ever there was one.

But what did matter, although she wished otherwise, was that she loved him and would probably always love him. She'd tried falling out of love with him several times and just couldn't do it.

Not even four years of attending a college in Florida had changed her feelings for him. The moment she had returned to Denver and he had walked into her father's paint store to make a purchase, she'd almost passed out from a mixture of lust and love.

Surprisingly, he had remembered her. He'd welcomed her back to town and asked her about school. But he hadn't asked her out, or offered to share a drink somewhere for old time's sake. Instead, he had gathered up the merchandise he'd come to the store to buy and left.

Her obsession with him had started back in high school when she and his sister Megan had worked on a science project together. Lucia would never forget the day that Megan's brother had come to pick them up from the library. She'd almost passed out when she first laid eyes on the handsome Derringer Westmoreland.

She thought she'd died and gone to heaven, and when they were introduced, he smiled at her, showing a pair of dimples that should be outlawed on anyone, especially a man. Her heart had melted then and there and hadn't solidified since. That introduction had taken place a few months after her sixteenth birthday. Now she was twenty-nine and she still got goose bumps whenever she thought about that first meeting.

Ever since her best friend, Chloe, had married Derringer's brother Ramsey, she saw more of Derringer, but nothing had changed. Whenever he saw her he was always nice to her. But she knew he really didn't see her as a woman he would be interested in.

So why wasn't she getting on with her life? Why was she risking it now by taking the roads to his place like a madwoman, needing to see for herself that he was still in one piece? When she'd gotten the news, she'd rushed to the hospital only to receive word from Chloe that he'd been released and was now recuperating at home.

He would probably wonder why she, of all people, was showing up at his place to check on him. She wouldn't be surprised if some woman was already there waiting on him hand and foot. But at the moment it didn't matter. Nothing mattered but to make sure for herself that Derringer was okay. Even the threat of possible thunderstorms this evening hadn't kept her away. She hated thunderstorms, and yet she had left her home to check on a man who barely knew she was alive.

It was a really stupid move, but she continued to speed down the road, deciding she would consider the foolishness of her actions later.

The loud sound of thunder blasting across the sky practically shook the house and awakened

Derringer. He immediately felt a sharp pain slice through his body, the first since he'd taken his pain medication, which meant it was time to take more.

Wrenching at the pain, he slowly pulled himself up in bed, reached across the nightstand and grabbed the pills his sister Megan had laid out for him. She'd said not to take more before six, but a quick glance at his clock said that it was only four and he needed the relief now. He was aching all over and his head felt as if it had split in two. He felt sixty-three instead of a mere thirty-three.

He had been on Sugar Foot's back less than three minutes when the mean-spirited animal had sent him flying. More than his ego had gotten bruised, and each and every time he breathed against what felt like broken ribs he was reminded of it.

Derringer eased back down onto the bed and laid flat on his back. He stared at the ceiling, waiting for the pain pills to kick in.

### Derringer's Dungeon.

Lucia slowed her truck when she came to the huge wooden marker in the road. Any other time she would have found it amusing that each of the Westmorelands had marked their property with such fanciful names. Already she had passed Jason's Place, Zane's Hideout, Canyon's Bluff, Stern's Stronghold, Riley's Station and Ramsey's Web. She'd heard when each Westmoreland reached the age of twenty-five they inherited a one-hundred-acre tract of land in this part of the state. That was why all the Westmorelands lived in proximity to each other.

She nervously gnawed on her bottom lip, finally thinking she might have made a mistake in coming here when she pulled into the yard and saw the huge two-story structure. This was her first time at Derringer's Dungeon and from what she'd heard, most women only came by way of an invite.

*So what was she doing here?*

She brought her car to a stop and cut off the engine and just sat there a moment as reality set in. She had acted on impulse and of course on love, but the truth of the matter was that she had no business being here. Derringer was probably in bed resting. He might even be on medication. Would he be able to come to the door? If he did, he would probably look at her as if she had two heads for wanting to check on him. In his book they were acquaintances, not even friends.

She was about to back out and leave, when she noticed the rain had started to come down harder and a huge box that had been left on the steps of the porch was getting wet. The least she could do was to move it to an area on the porch where the rain couldn't touch it.

Grabbing her umbrella out the backseat, she hurriedly got out of the truck and ran toward the porch to move the box closer to the door. She jumped at the sound of thunder and drew in a sharp breath when a bolt of lightning barely missed the top of her head.

Remembering what Chloe had once told her about how the Westmoreland men were notorious for not locking their doors, she tried the doorknob and saw what her best friend had said was true. The door was not locked.

Slowly opening the door, she stuck her head in and called out in a whisper in case he was downstairs sleeping on the sofa instead of upstairs. "Derringer?"

When he didn't answer, she decided she might as well bring the box inside. The moment she entered the house, she glanced around, admiring his sister Gemma's decorating skills. Derringer's home was beautiful, and the floor-to-ceiling windows took full advantage of the mountain view. She was about to ease back out the door and lock it behind her when she heard a crash followed by a bump and then a loud curse.

Acting on instinct, she took the stairs two at a time and stumbled into several guest bedrooms

before entering what had to be the master bedroom. It was decorated in a more masculine theme than all the others. She glanced around and then she saw him lying on the floor as if he'd fallen out of bed.

"Derringer!"

She raced over to him and knelt down beside him, trying to ignore the fact that the only clothing he had on was a pair of black briefs. "Derringer? Are you all right?" she asked, a degree of panic clearly in her voice. "Derringer?"

He slowly opened his eyes and she couldn't stop the fluttering of her heart when she gazed down into the gorgeous dark depths. The first thing she noticed was they were glassy, as if he'd taken one drink too many...or probably one pill too many. She then took a deep breath when a slow smile touched the corners of his lips and those knock-a-girl-off-her-feet dimples appeared in his cheeks.

"Well, now, aren't you a pretty thing," he said in slurred speech. "What's your name?"

"Puddin' Tame," she replied smartly. His actions confirmed he'd evidently taken one pill too many since he was acting as if he'd never seen her in his life.

"That's a real nice name, sweetheart."

She rolled her eyes. "Whatever you say, cowboy. Would you like to explain why you're down here and not up there?" She motioned toward his bed.

"That's easy enough to answer. I went to the bathroom and when I got back, someone moved the bed and I missed it."

She tried keeping the smile from her face. "You sure did miss it. Come on and hold on to me while I help you back into it."

"Someone might move it again."

"I doubt it," she said, grinning, while thinking even when he was under the influence of medication, the deep, husky sound of his voice could do things to her. Make the nipples of her breasts strain against her damp shirt. "Come on, you have to be hurting something awful."

He chuckled. "No, in fact I feel good. Good enough to try riding Sugar Foot again."

She shook her head. "Not tonight you won't. Come on, Derringer, let me help you up and get you back in bed."

"I like it down here."

"Sorry, pal, but you can't stay down here. You either let me help you up or I'll call one of your brothers to help you."

Now it was he who shook his head. "I don't want to see any of them again for a while. All they know how to say is, I told you so."

"Well maybe next time you'll listen to them. Come on."

It took several attempts before she was able to help Derringer to his feet. It wasn't easy to steer him to the bed, and she suddenly lost her balance and found herself tumbling backward onto his bed with him falling on top of her.

"I need you to shift your body a little to get off me, Derringer," she said when she was able to catch her breath.

He flashed those sexy dimples again and spoke in a voice throaty with arousal. "Um, why? I like being on top of you, Puddin'. You feel good."

She blinked and then realized the extent of her situation. She was in bed—Derringer's bed—and he was sprawled on top of her. It didn't take much to feel the bulge of his erection through his briefs that was connecting with the area between her legs. A slow burn began inching from that very spot and spreading all through her, entering her bloodstream and making her skin burn all over. And if that wasn't bad enough, the nipples of her breasts, which were already straining, hardened like pebbles against his bandaged chest.

As if sensing her body's reaction to their position, he lifted his face to stare down at her and the

glassy eyes that snagged hers were so drenched with desire that her breath got caught in her throat. ~~Something she'd never felt before, a pooling of heat, settled between her legs, wetting her panties, and~~ she watched his nostrils flare in response to her scent.

The air between them was crackling more than the thunder and lightning outside, and his chest seemed to rise and fall with each and every beat of her heart.

Fearing her own rapid reaction to their predicament, she made an attempt to gently shove him off her, but found she was no match for his solid weight.

“Derringer...”

Instead of answering her, he reached up and cupped her face into his hands as if her mouth was water he needed to sip, and before she could turn her mouth away from his, with perfect aim, he lowered his mouth and began devouring hers.

Derringer figured he had to be dreaming, and if he was, then this was one delusion he didn't care to ever wake up from. Feasting on Puddin' Tame's lips was the epitome of sensual pleasure. Molded perfectly, they were hot and moist. And the way he had plunged his tongue inside her mouth, devouring hers was the sort of fantasy wet dreams were made of.

Somewhere in the back of his lust-induced mind he remembered getting thrown off a horse; in that case, his body should be in pain. However, the only ache he was feeling was the one in his groin that signaled a need so great his body was all but trembling inside.

Who was this woman and where did she come from? Was he supposed to know her? Why was she so enticing him to do things he shouldn't do? A part of him felt that he wasn't in his right mind, but then another part didn't give a damn if he was in his wrong mind. The only thing he knew for sure was that he wanted her. He could eat her alive and wouldn't mind testing that theory to see if he really could.

He shifted his body a little and brought her in the center of the bed with him. He lifted his mouth only slightly off hers to whisper huskily against her moist lips, “Damn, Puddin', you feel good.”

And then his mouth was back on hers, sucking on her tongue as if he was a man who needed to taste her as much as he needed to breathe, and what was so shocking to him at that moment was that he was convinced that he did.

Lucia knew she had to put a stop to what she and Derringer were doing. He was delirious and didn't even know who she was. But it was hard to stop him when her body was responding to everything he was doing to it. Her mouth had never been kissed like this before. No man had consumed her with so much pleasure for her not to think straight. Never had she known a woman could want a man with such magnitude as she wanted Derringer. She had always loved him, but now she wanted him with a need that had been foreign to her.

*Until now.*

“I want you, Puddin'...”

She blinked as he slightly leaned up off her and the reality of the moment hit her. Although he was delusional, Lucia realized that the honorable part of Derringer would not force her into doing anything she didn't want to do. Now was her chance to slide from beneath him and leave. Chances were, he wouldn't even remember anything about tonight.

But something wouldn't let her flee. It kept her rooted in place as she stared up at him, caught in a visual exchange that not only entrapped her sight but also her mind. A part of her knew this would be the one and only time she would have his attention like this. Sadly, it would be the one and only time

he would want her. She pushed to the back of her mind that it had taken an overdose of pain medication to get him to this state.

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If she didn't love him so much, she probably would have been able to fight this sexual pull, but love combined with lust was a force she couldn't fight, and a part of her truly didn't want to. She would be thirty in ten months and as of yet, she hadn't experienced how it would feel to be with a man. It was about time she did and it might as well be with the one and only man she'd ever loved.

She would take tonight into her soul, cradle it in her heart and keep it safe in the deep recesses of her brain. And when she saw him again she would have a secret he wouldn't know about, although he would have been the main person responsible for making it happen.

Captured by his deep, dark gaze, she knew it was only a matter of minutes before he took her silence as consent. Now that she'd made up her mind about what she wanted to do, she didn't want to wait even that long. And as more liquid heat coiled between her legs, she lifted her arms to wrap around his neck and tilted her mouth to his. The moment she did, pleasure between them exploded and plunged her into a mirage of sensations that she'd never even dreamed about.

He began kissing her senseless and in her lust-induced mind she was barely aware of him pulling her blouse over her head and removing her lace bra from her body. But she knew the exact moment he latched on to a nipple and eased it between heated lips and began sucking on it as though it was just for his enjoyment.

Waves of pleasures shot through every part of her as if she'd been hit with an atomic missile that detonated on impact. She caught his head between her hands to keep his mouth from going anywhere but on her. Several moans she hadn't known she was capable of making eased from her lips and she couldn't help but writhe the lower part of her body against him, needing to feel the hardness of his erection between her thighs.

As if he wanted more, she knew the moment his fingers eased up her skirt and tracked their way to the part of her that was burning more than any other part—her moist, hot center. He slid one hand beneath the edge of her panties and, as if his finger knew exactly what it was after, it slowly and diligently trekked toward her throbbing clitoris.

“Derringer!”

Her entire body began trembling and with all the intent of a man on a mission he began stroking her with fingers that should be outlawed right along with his dimples. Her womanly core was getting more attention than it had ever gotten before, and she could feel sensations building up inside her at such a rapid rate she was feeling dizzy.

“I want you,” he said in a low, guttural tone. And then he kissed her again in a deep, drugging exchange that had him sliding his tongue all over her mouth, tasting her as if doing so was his right. Just the thought made her powerless to do anything other than accept his seduction with profound pleasure.

She was so into the kiss that she hadn't realized he had worked his briefs down his legs and had removed her panties, until she felt them flesh to flesh. His skin felt hot against hers and the iron-steel feel of his thighs resting over hers was penetrating through to every pore in her body.

And when he broke the kiss to ease his body over hers, she was so overcome with desire that she was rendered powerless to stop him.

He lowered his eyes to her breasts and smiled before his eyes slowly returned to her face and snagged her gaze. The look he gave her at that moment was so sexual that she was willing to convince herself that she was the only woman on earth he'd ever given it to. And she was just that far gone to believe it.

Then he leaned down and captured her mouth at the same time he thrust into her body. She couldn't help but cry out from the pain and, as if he sensed what had happened and just what it meant

his body went completely still. He eased his mouth away from hers and glanced down at her while still deeply embedded within her. Not sure just what thoughts were going through his mind about her virginal state and not really wanting to know, she reached up and wrapped her arms around him. And when she began using her tongue to kiss him the way he'd done to her earlier, she felt his body tremble slightly before he began moving inside her. The first time he did so, she thought she would come apart, but as his body began thrusting into hers, smoldering heat from him was being transferred to her, building a fire she could not contain any longer.

He released her mouth long enough for her to call his name. "Derringer!"

He was devouring her in a way she'd never been devoured before and she couldn't help but cry out as his tongue took over. The lower part of him was sending waves of pleasure crashing through her that had her sucking in sharp breaths.

She had heard—mainly from Chloe during one of their infamous girl chats—that making love to a man, especially one you loved, was a totally rewarding and satisfying experience. But no one told her that it could be so mind-consuming and pleasurable. Or that it could literally curl your toes. Maybe Chloe had told her these things and she hadn't believed her. Well, now she believed. And with each hard plunge into her body, Derringer was making all the fantasies she'd ever had of him a reality.

He released her mouth to look down at her while he kept making love to her, riding her the way he rode those horses he tamed. He was good. And he was also greedy. To keep up with him, she kept grinding her hips against his as sensations within her intensified to a degree that she knew she couldn't handle much longer. She cried out again and again as sensations continued to spiral through her.

And then something happened that had never happened to her before and she knew what it was the moment she felt it. He drove deeper and deeper into her, riding her right into a climax of monumental proportions. He lifted his head and met her gaze and the dark orbs gazing at her pushed her even more over the edge.

And when he whispered the name Puddin', thinking it was hers, she accepted it because it had sounded so good coming from him, and it was all she needed to hear to push her into her very first orgasm.

"Derringer!"

He lowered his head again and his tongue slid easily inside her mouth. She continued to grind against him, accepting everything he was giving. Moments later, after breaking off the kiss, he threw his head back and whispered the name again in a deep guttural tone, and he continued to stroke her into sweet oblivion.

Lucia slowly opened her eyes while wondering just how long she'd slept. The last thing she remembered was dropping her head onto the pillow. She'd been weak, spent and totally and thoroughly satisfied after making love to the sexiest man to walk the face of the earth.

He was no longer on top of her, but was asleep beside her. She missed the weight of him pressing down on her. She missed how his heart felt beating against hers, but most of all she missed the feel of him being inside her.

Remnants of ecstasy were still trickling through her when she thought of what they'd done and all they'd shared. Being gripped in the throes of orgasm after orgasm for several long moments was enough to blow anybody's mind and it had certainly done a job on her. And the way he had looked down at her—during those times he wasn't kissing her—had sent exquisite sensation after exquisite sensation spiraling through her. Even with the bandages covering his chest and parts of his back, she



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