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## LORD DACRE OF GILSLAND: OR. THE RISING IN THE NORTH.

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE OF THE DAYS OF ELIZABETH.

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Agents, by and the

By E. M. Stewart.

CHAPTER XXI. Alma, ch' avesti piu la fede cara

E'l nome quasi, ignoto, e peregrin, Al tempo nostro, della caztitade, Che la tua vita, è la tua verde etade.

ABIOSTO.

It was on the night after the defeat of Lord Dacre the sound of a key grating in a dungeen door truly how it fares with the Royal Mary?" the from the lethargy of grief an unfortunate "The shadow of death, Gertrude, darkens on her

vassals, unknowing whether to fight or fly, I am know not the number of the townes, but I gesse it Lord. I have told thee, in such sincerity as I surrounded by the fierce agents of Elizabeth's power. will not be under six or seven hundred, at the least vouchsafe but to few, how mine own heart is affected But wert thou free, with thine own slaves about that shall be executed of the comon sorte, besides thee, less of courtesy would grace thy speech.-

Coward, thou didst not dare lift thine own hand against my Lord !" Leicester rose, and replied in a tone of bitter indignation, " Miserable maiden, I leave thee to thy fate; a few days only will pass, ere thou art condemned to the horrors of starvation."

me no more."

"That wretched woman, whom I indeed found dead in the house from which thou wast taken by the hated Dacre, merited not thy pity, Gertrude; for all her wish was to see humbled in thee the pride of her brother."

"'Tis meet that Dacre should have thy hate," said Gertrude, " and name not thou the sins of Euphrasia in union with thine own; for lo, though black as the raven, they shall become in comparison more white than snow! Oh, man, if thou wouldst show me any mercy, now leave me to myself"

"Gertrude," suid the Earl, again relenting, "sweet-est, have mercy on thyself! Oh think, should the brutal Bowes retract, should he spare thee for awhile, bethink thee thou art yet in the power of Elizabeth. Oh, you know not the invention of her malice; she who inflicts all cruelty and injustice, because she is secure from punishment."

"Oh fool !" answered Gertrude, "and does she think herself secure? The time shall be for her, proud Lord, and do thou beware of it thyself; that time when the world, for which all has been risked, shall melt like the mists of the morning, when the toys for which the soul has been bartered shall be snatched from their possessor's grasp. Let Elizabeth find a spell for immortality, and then only think herself secure! But death, which she dis-misses from her thoughts, shall indeed come upon her, like a thief in the silent night." Ónce more did Lord Leicester turn ere he quitted

the dungeon.

"Gertrude," he said, in a subdued voice, "let me not part with thy ourse upon my head; forgive me, unhappy girl, for my share in thy wretched fate." "Alas!" replied Gertrude, "what avails my for-giveness, rather bend to thy God, and ask His pardon for the many evils thou hast wrought: yet if mine can avail thee, believe that it is bestowed .--Well do I know that my dwelling is in the shadow of death, and in peace would I part even from thee." " Is there no question you would ask of me, Ger-

trude; no message which I can convey?" "Yes, my blessing to my cousin, to my gentle be spared unti Lucy, should she cross thy path; and oh, tell me from London.

the prisoners taken in the felde."

While these cruelties were exercised upon the meaner prisoners, those of superior rank were re-served for forfeiture and attainder, and their property was bestowed upon the parasites of the Queen. Pilkington, the Eishop of Durham, writing to solicit grace from Elizabeth for the unfortunate inhabitants of his diocese, observes-" The number of offenders is so grete that fewe innocent shal be lefte to trie the guiltie; and if the forfeited lands be bestowed on such as be strangers, and will not dwell in the countrie, the people shall be withouto heads, the countri desert, and noe number of freeholders to dce justice by juries or serve in the wars."

In the exercise of these cruelties Sir George Bowes was especially conspicuous on one occasion, when sentencing a man named Harrison, to be hanged in his own orchard, he brutally observed that the best truit which a tree could bear was a dead traitor. To the mercy of this man it was that the innocent Gertrude was chiefly committed.

Meanwhile Lord Morden pleaded with a kind of frantic eloquence that she might be spared while he journeyed to London. Too keenly did he feel, as Lord Leicester had told Gertrude herself, that it was he who had delivered her to Elizabeth's brutal officer. Now, even in the agony of his fears for her life, Lord Morden was inclined to condemn the measure he had taken, though the only one which would have sufficed to rescue the maiden from Leicester; nor had he thought on taking the unhappy young prisoner from the Earl that Lord Hunsdon would have placed her in the power of Sir George.

It is due, however, to the warm heart of that nobleman, to declare that he had not done so, could he have conceived that Sir George would have de-sired to put in force against a youthful and delicate female the most severe rigor of the law. Had it not been better, thought Lord Morden, even to have suffered her to remain in the power of Leicester .----Some fortunate accident might have rescued her from him, but naught save Elizabeth's own voice might avail to preserve her now.

Lord Leicester, finding what was the subject of discussion, threw the weight of his influence into the scale against Sir George Bowes, declaring it as his opinion that the anger of the Queen would probably he great should any one presume to take, without her orders, the life of the maiden. Lord Scrope eagerly availed himself of the aid of this new advocate on the side of that compassion to which his own heart leaned; and Sir George was obliged to yield an unwilling assent that Gertrude should be spared until after the return of Lord Morden

The brutality, however, of his temper broke out in a sarcastic inquiry addressed to the Earl-"Were it not well that he himself solicited the Queen's grace on behalf of the fair damsel? It were the Earl, who had sent some of his attendants forpity that the good Baron of Hunsdon had removed her from his Lordship's own careful keeping ; though perchance, had the gallant Earl still maintained the ing towards the casement, he immediately recognizcalled him to account, for his own loyalty, as well through it. There were two persons, one a young as that of the maiden." "Assuredly, Sir George," said Lord Hunsdon. sharply, "had we surmised the savage nature of thy his horse to the door of the hostel, immediately justice, the popr damsel would not have been consigned to it by us." "And assuredly," observed the Earl of Leicester with a sneer, "we can keep our loyalty without stain in the estimation of the Royal Elizabeth, and vet dispense with the counsels of Sir George Bowes. Lord Morden, on his part, too happy to have secured even a respite for the unfortunate Gertrude. spoke a short farewell to Lord Scrope and his companions, and left the room to prepare immediately for his journey to London. That very hour did the generous young nobleman depart from Carlisle .--But scarcely was he clear of the city when he was overtaken by a party of horsemen, at the head of whom was the Earl of Leicester, hasteniug, like himself, to London. A few words did he address to the latter upon the subject of his mission to Elizabeth; and the young man thought he could discover something of a better feeling than was common to Leicester ; but it had required, perhaps, either more or less than a human heart unmoved to have beheld the ill-fated Gertrude in her dungeon. "Lord Morden," he said, in a low tone, as they rode side by side towards London, "I were sunk in your mind to a measure of obloquy, which I could but ill brook, did I leave you to imagine that I am indifferent to the fate of that unfortunate maiden .---Bitterly do I feel that I am its cause. It matters not with you that I should gloss my actions with a thin varnish of hypocrisy. I know myself, young Lord. A man I am, purchasing life's pleasures, and banqueting where'er it falls the bitterness of my hate, at a price which thy sensitive spirit may, perhaps, call too dear. But I were other than man, more black even than a fiend, if I did not curse the evil chance which forbids me now to rescue the beautiful Gertrude. Alas, alas, for me to interfere be so happy as to save her. But you, more fortuquence-solicit Cecil in her behalf, for Cecil loves thee. And remind Elizabeth, too, of how that maiden saved her own life; jealous and cruel as she more humane feelings."

vouchsafe but to few, how mine own heart is affected he may vouchsafe thee an interview with thine illtowards the beautiful Gertrude. I shall reach the fated cousin." city with yourself, and it may be I shall have the But again I

behalf on my lip would but breed hard thoughts in the heart of Elizabeth. To you then do I commit the damsel's cause, and heaven prosper it under your care. I do believe, Lord Morden, you would had escaped, and that Sir George Bowes was im-work good in this case even for the reward of your pressed with a belief that the damsel could discover work good in this case even for the reward of your heart's own applauding thoughts; yet, whether you win or loss in seeking the Queen's favor for the poor damsel, believe, at least, if ever any other suit of your's be ditticult to obtain, it will find a warm advocate in Leicester."

"You have reason, my Lord," answered Lord Morden, "when you think I should feel myself enough rewarded by saving the fair Gertrude, that reward were indeed a jewel beyond price."

Here the conversation respecting Gertrude dropped. The two noblemen were both journeying towards London, and each had resolved to travel night and day, but in spite of that explanatory conversation even the insolent assurance of Lord Leicester could not enable him to support the company of the young Morden, by whom he well knew that he must in secret be both hated and despised.

Such is the sublime influence of virtue that the contempt even of Gertrude had touched Lord Lei-cester's soul; he felt for the first time in the course of his profligate career, that he had met with a crea-ture too pure and holy to be his prey; and while his heart smarted with such a severe sense of shame as it had never before experienced, he could yet have kissed the hand which inflicted on it that keen wound.

Under the influence of these feelings it was that the Earl, when they had ridden some six miles together; made an excuse to part company with his companion; nor did they again encounter each in the course of their journey.

It was towards the close of a clear winter day that the Earl of Leicester arrived at the town of Barnet; it was his intention to press on towards London that night, as he designed to seek an interview with the Queen immediately on his arrival. His selfishness was now on the alert, and he dread-cd the use of which Cecil and his other foes in the ministry might make of the late audacious violation of his Sovereign's commands. The inns of those days, as we have before observed, could not supply their guests with the ready and luxurious accommod tion of our modern hotels ; and when Lord Leices ter reached the principla hostle of Barnet, he found its best apartment in the possession of a party but newly arrived there. The casement of this apartment overlooked the court-yard of the hostle, and

the noise of the trampling horses of his retinue drew some of the persons occupying the room to

that it was given to thee by the Earl of Leicester

NO. 20.

city with yourself, and it may be I shall have the earlier audience of the Queen; but not a word shall I then say of the fair Gertrude, for soft words in her cealing how he had himself been the cause of her capture, stated that the maiden had been in asso-ciation with the rebels, and had fallen into the hands of the Queen's forces; that Leonard Dacre the names of many gentlemen who had been con-cerned in the rebellion. In fear, too, that Elizabeth might prove inexorable, or Lord Scrope refuse to Lucy an interview with her cousin, the Earl now told her that he was the bearer to her of the last blessing of that unfortunate girl.

"And my poor uncle know you aught of him, my Lord?" inquired Lucy, through her tears, "Alas, maiden," replied Leicester, "I did fin-deed b.ar Gert.u e, when first she stood a captive before the brutal Bowes, thank lleaven that her tather was no more."

"Alas, my poor brother," said Richard Fenton, well it is, indeed, that thou dost not live to mourn over the evil destiny of thy beautiful and iunocent child."

" Maiden," said the Earl, as he turned to leave the room, "I have no more to say; the best service. thou canst render to thy cousin is to hasten, as I command thee to Carlisle. He who goes to sue the Queen in her behalf will not delay, for he loves the noble Gertrude. Who indeed," continued Leicester passionately, "could know that glorious creature and love her not? Farewell, mniden, be not too sanguing in thine hope, for I am free to own that thy cousin scemeth a being too exalted to be longer a dweller in this petty world."

With these words the Earl made a courtly obeisance to Lucy and left the apartment. She looked at the diamond ring which he had given her to present to Lord Scrope, and then turning to her lover and father, she implored that they would proceed en their journey without more delay. To account for the presence of Lucy and her companions at the inn at Barnet, it is necessary to revert to that day on which her father and uncle were examined at Whitehall. It may be remembered that on perceiving them she fell senseless into Henry's arms, who, alarmed and dreading a recognition of himself, which would deprive the poor girl of her only protector, hastened to bear her immediately to the secure retreat beneath his ruined dwelling at Char-ing. Thither he was accompanied both by Edward Wood and Master Williams, and thus it was that Willoughton failed to hear what kind of punishment was to be inflicted on the unfortunate Hard-

The terror of beholding her father and uncle in

roused from the lethargy of grief an unfortunate captive in the Castle of Carlisle. Two figures entered-one the gaoler, who set a lamp upon the stone floor of the dangeon and withdrew. The other person then advanced. He was a tall and handsome man, and the plume of white feathers which waved in his black velvet cap was fastened there by a large ruby.

The captive-a female-had turned her head at the moment of his entrance; but when she caught a glimpse of his features, she cowered down and hid her face, as if in horror, upon her couch of straw. "Gertrude!" said the stranger, in a trembling

toxe: but she replied not. Gertrude !" he said again ; "unhappy girl.

come to save you." "Leave me, false and cruel Lord !" she then an swered; "I seek no safety at thy hands."

"Oh, Gertrude," exclaimed Lord Leicester-for he it was who thus visited her dungeon-" refuse not the only aid which can avert the horrible fate to which you have been decreed by the savage Sir George Bowes. They will starve you, Gertrude, if you do not discover what, alas! it is Impossible that you should know-the retreat where Leonard Dacre lies concealed "

"And who may I thank for such a fate? Who but the barbarous Earl of Leicester? Had I not been safe with Dacre but for thee-but for thy fercible entrance to his castle with the recreants who had fled, from the battle-field? Oh, my dear Lord-generous, noble Dacre ! Oh that I could indeed tell how it fares with thee! Alas, alas! art thou yet in life, whom I beheld struck down by the villain hand of a base slave ?"

"By all that is sacred;" said the Earl, "my heart bleeds for you, Gertrude. Oh, reject not the proffered safety 1 I have, by an enermous bribe, secured to you an opportunity of escape. You do not know how hard a thing it is to die." "What hast thou to do with sacred things ?" rejoined Gertrude in a tone of scern, "or what dost thou know of how the innocent can meet death ?" ebas. "Oh, Gertrude !" answered the Earl, " all this I can bear from you now ; , yet am I not the cause of your condition. No, no! upbraid, for that thy friend, the virtuous, the upright Morden, who, to tear thes from me, delivered thes to the dogged blockhead Hunsdon, whose zeal for the service of his tiger-hearted cousin" consigned thee to Sir George Bowes and to the Castle of Carlisle."

"I do thank the noble Morden that he did so to save me from thy hands" said Gertrude. "Ob, what is death to the infamy of thy love ? Leave me, Earlie of Leicester; for the sound even of thy woice is pollution ", bally Mago will ut an

defyiby power here, I flee with thee a willing pri-soner of hour must perforce leave me, to my fate ; fallen into the hands either of Sussex or Bowes had

brow as on thine own." "Alas, she is murdered |" said Gertrude.

"It were well," retorted the Earl, " if she had died before, ere so many of the young and fair were implicated in her doom. Gertrude, farewell! If I stay longer I shall destroy myself, by compelling enviable office of her jailor, the Queen might have ed one of the faces that were curiously looking thee to fly."

With these words, Lord Leicester took the lamp, and once more was Gertrude left to the solitude and darkness of her dungeon.

Having thus failed in all his designs upon the maiden's liberty, the military enthusiasm of the Earl of Leicester speedily departed, and he became suddeniy anxious to appease the Queen, whose anger he well knew would be excited by his having, without her knowledge, presumed to journey into the North. From the dungeon then of Gertrude he proceeded to a magnificent chamber in the Castle of Carlisle, blazing with tapers, and a cheerful fire, a contrast to the cell of the poor captive whom he had left. Here were seated Lord Hunsdon and Sir George Bowes, with Lord Scrope, the Governor of the Castle, and the Warden of the Marches. Lord Morden too was there, and some warmth of dispute was evident at the moment the Earl of Leicester entered. He quickly discovered its cause-Lord Morden had prayed that the maiden might be spared. while he hastened to London to solicit for her the pardon of the Queen, whom he contended would be but ill pleased, if her officers, without her especial warrant, sacrificed the life of a person who had once saved her own.

Sir George Bowes, on the other hand, the natural brutality of whose temper had been aggravated by the disgrace which he had sustained at Bernard Castle, was vehement that she should be immediately put to death, or at least that the instructions which he had received from Cecil should be enforced with regard to this maiden, and that she should be compelled, by lack of food, to yield up the names of such persons as she knew to have been concerned in the rebellion.

Lord Hunsdon, whose unpolished manners were accompanied by a heart too kind and honest for the Court of Elizabeth, was equally warm in the opinion of Lord Morden; and Lord Scrope, though his feelings inclined him against the measure proposed by Sir George, yet hesitated to take part with Lord in her favor with Elizabeth would be but to sign Hunsdon, remembering how Elizabeth had lately her death-warrant with mine own hand. I may not reproached Sussex with slackness in her service, and that she had even written to him a letter full of nato may venture to plead for, without destroy-reproaches because immediately on the retreat of ing her. Oh, neglect not any argument of eloreproaches, because immediately on the retreat of the two Earls he had not exercised with greater rigor the barbarities of martial law. Her Grace had, indeed, no great reason to make these complaints to her lieutenant, who had, to a common apprehension, and after the attempt of Lord Dacre, all who had and are the accessing of the descent o

"Oh, my Lord," said Lord Morden, " if thus you

the casement. At the moment it happened that ward to inquire what accommodations he might expect, himself rode into the court-yard, and glancand beautiful female, the other a grotesque looking old man. On perceiving them, Lcicester, walking dismounted, and on the appearance of the host demanded to be led at once to the room occupied by the persons whom whom he had observed at the casement.

They, who had on their part had also recognized the Earl, had quickly drawn back in consternation, his company being the very last into which they were desirous at that moment to fall. While with their companions, two in number, they conversed this inopportune occurrence, the door opened and the Earl himself appeared. Lucy Fenton, for she was the young female whom Leicester had observed at the casement, shrunk back on his appearance, and involuntarly clasped the hand of Henry Willoughton, who stood beside her; a pale, thin old man, there was too, whose eyes glanced anxiously at his beautiful daughter, when she whispered to him the name of the Earl of Leicester: Master Williams, for he was the companion of our party, started to his feet in an absolute consternation of awe at finding himself immediately in the presence of a person so redoubtable, both for his rank and his evil doings, as

the Earl of Leicester, With regard indeed to the last nameed claim to consideration, Master Williams was of opinion that not the Sovereign of the infernal regions himself possessed it in a more eminent degree than the Earl. Such being the state of his feelings, it may be imagined with what kind of trepidation he now stood trembling and gaping at Leicester. The latter, however, noticed him not; but perceiving the averted eyes and timid air of Lucy, he said with some slight bitterness of satire in his looks and tones:

"Fear me not, young damsel, very beautiful you may be, but no object are you of my pursuit. I do not intrude upon you to convey to you a word from your cousin the fair Gertrude Harding." "Ah!" exclaimed Lucy, springing forward with clasped hands, " what betides, my dear Gertrude: "Oh, noble Earl, delay me not in the telling be thy. news for good or for evil ?" A shade of grief crossed the countenance of Leicester. "Ob, maiden," he replied, "the of life thy cousin lies at the mercy of the Queen, and the sword is, there are yet times when her heart softens to, of instice is suspended over her head by a single

"Oh, but the Queen can be merciful," exclaimed can mourn the destiny to which your own designs Lucy, " for she, has freed my old father from prihave so much contributed to condemn that hapless, son, and she has given me leave to journey to the

such a condition brought on a partial relapse of that fever which had first seized Lucy in the cottage of Oicely Merton, and for three days the half distracted Henry hung over her couch, expecting that she would yet be ravished from him by the hand of death. The kind hearted Williams kept him company, not returning home till Lucy was again out of danger; and Edward Wood, who learned on his return to the city the nature of John Harding's sentence, and that it was to be executed that evening, would not add to the measure of Willoughton's dis tress by making him acquainted with it when he visited him at Charing on the succeeding day. It wes a matter of real grief to the amiable Warden that his official duties compelled him not only to witness that ill usage to which John Harding was subjected but utterly precluded the possibility of his rendering him any assistance before he left London ; for this assistance could Edward Wood have obtained an opportunity of speaking with the unhappy merchant, he would not have offered to hesitatate on account of the Queen's prohibition.

Meanwhile, Babington, Tichborne, and their associates, were brought to trial. Giffard, the infamous spy, had eccaped to Paris, where he died in prison about three years afterwards. As had been expected, Babington and his friends were found guilty; nor does it need here to detail how the cunning Walsingham had managed to implicate the Queen of Scots in their guilt.

The condomnation of the prisoners was immediately followed by their execution ; and the manner of that execution was such on the first day, as to revolt the public feelings even of that age, and the remaining prisoners were suffered to expire ere they were cut down from the gallows.

It was the morning after this massacre, that Lucy Fenton, escaping the careful guardage of her lover, hastened to Whitehall, and throwing herself at the feet of Elizabeth as she issued from the palace gates to take an airing on horseback, she implored pardon for her father and uncle. Elizabeth as before observed, loved popularity, and she was sensible that the cruel execution of Babington and the severe measures adopted in the North, placed her popularity at the moment in some jeopardy. It would be a fine act of grace to liberate the father of this damsel intimately connected as he was with the Hardings, who had become so notorious for their attachment to the cause of Qucen Mary : and Elizabeth-a keen observer of character-had perceived during that single examination of Richard Fenton, which had taken place in her presence, that he was not one of the bold and exalted spirits whose enthusiasm would endanger her own peace; she might, therefore, seem to be impartial, and yet remain secure. Immediately, therefore did she grant to Lucy the release of her father. Henry Willoughton, too, who had not ostensibly been mixed with the northern insurrection, received permission to retire if he willed it, to his estates near Carlisle ; and the grate-