

protostation, and badinago—he could not satisfy himself that the gentle and bewitching manners of the lady received any accession from any increase, in his favour, of the regard and attention she seemed to extend to all the visitors who frequented her father's castle. Ramorny surveyed this equability of enchanting manner, with the pain of one who, fired with a strong passion, sees ordinary companions basking in the sunshine of favour which he wished to be confined to himself. He felt pained, but the pain was an increase of passion with a diminution of hope. His violent temper hurried him into secret cursing of the day on which he entered in so thankless an expedition; determinations to escape from his duty; and vows that he would secure Elizabeth's love, die, or sacrifice his Prince.

Ramorny's threats were not empty sounds—restrained by no religion—no respect for laws—no terror of punishment—no fear of man—and despising reputation and honour as gewgaws for old women and children—he was fit for the execution of any measure, executed through treachery and blood, to gratify his passions. Chagrined by the manner of Elizabeth, which retained its torturing equability of gentleness and kindness, without any exhibition of partiality, he was ill prepared for a letter which arrived from the Prince, chiding him for his delay; hinting, in his manner, that the rooks of Dunbar and Douglas had flown away with his heart, and requesting him to give up the chase and return to his friend. He added, that he understood that his mother, the Queen, had declared for the Douglas; and that he would take her if she was as black as the good Sir James himself.

"An' thou wilt," ejaculated Ramorny as he perused the letter, "thou shalt at least have the dowery of Ramorny's sword!"

The incensed knight saw, in the midst of his passion, that little good would result from remaining at present longer at the castle:—His efforts to produce a corresponding affection in the bosom of Elizabeth were unavailing. He resolved, therefore, to take his departure: and having kissed the hand of his cruel mistress and bid adieu to Lord Archibald, he departed. As he journeyed to Linlithgow, where he was to meet the Duke, he occupied himself in deep meditation. His thoughts reverted continually to Elizabeth

Douglas, whom he pictured to himself the loving and beloved wife of Rothsay, whose success with the fair he envied, but whose openness and generosity he despised as weakness. There already existed a rivalry between them as to the affections of a young lady who had eloped with Ramorny from her father's house, but who afterwards left him for the more enchanting society of the young Duke. This, Ramorny had borne with apparent indifference; but though he was satisfied that the love of the damsel had not first been solicited by Rothsay, he could not forgive him his superiority of attraction and imputed to him as a fault what might, with more propriety, have been termed misfortune. To lose another object of his affections, and that, too, by ministering to his own discomfiture, would ill become his character for intrigue, and ill accord with the present state of his love for the lady and hatred for the rival. He must, therefore, endeavour to prevent the union between Rothsay and Elizabeth Douglas; and if that should fail, he was resolved that the loss the lady would not involve the loss of his victim. His first step was to falsify his account of the two women; and in this he could not do better than reverse their attributes, and substitute Bess of Dunbar for fair Douglas.

"Well, Ramorny," cried the Prince, as he met the knight in the audience chamber of the palace, "what progress hast thou made in the south? Thy tarrying indicates enjoyment; for when did Ramorny waver when there was not something to afford him pleasure and amusement?"

"Your Grace is right," answered Ramorny. "The pleasures of March's castle are indeed intoxicating. But thou it was who didst send me in the way of temptation; and if Elizabeth of Dunbar has, by her enchantment, drawn largely on the time of thy commissioner, thou hast thyself to blame. Lord Salisbury, thou knowest, said, that her predecessor's love shafts—meaning the arrows she sent from the old castle walls—were straight to the heart; and as the lieutenant of this kingdom, and the protector of its subjects, it was thy duty to guard me against power which seems to be hereditary in the family of March."

"Oh, then, Black Bess is fair after all!" cried the Duke. "Give me thy hand!"