

Then followed the Bothwell disgrace, the queen's imprisonment at Lochleven, and my own flight from Scotland to save my head.

You will hear of Mary again in this history, and still clinging to her you will find that same strange fatality which during all her life brought evils upon her that were infectious to her friends and wrought their ruin.

One evening, in the autumn of the year 1567, I was sitting moodily before my fire in the town of Dundee, brooding over Mary's disgraceful liaison with Bothwell. I had solemnly resolved that I would see her never again, and that I would turn my back upon the evil life I had led for so many years, and would seek to acquire that quiescence of nature which is necessary to an endurable old age. A tumultuous soul in the breast of an old man breeds torture, but age, with the heart at rest, I have found is the best season of life.

In the midst of my gloomy thoughts and good resolves my friend, Sir Thomas Douglas, entered my room without warning and in great agitation.

"Are you alone?" he asked hurriedly, in a low voice.

"Save for your welcome presence, Sir Thomas," I answered, offering my hand.

"The queen has been seized," he whispered, "and warrants for high treason have been issued against many of her friends—you among the number. Officers are now coming to serve the writ. I rode hither in all haste to warn you. Lose not a moment, but flee for your life. The Earl of Murray will be made regent to-morrow."

"My servant? My horse?" I responded.

"Do not wait. Go at once. I shall try to send a horse for you to Craig's ferry. If I fail, cross the firth without one. Here is a purse. The queen sends it to you. Go! Go!"

I acted upon the advice of Sir Thomas and hurried into the street, snatching up my hat, cloak, and sword as I