

was grasped by the bridle, the rider raised his head, and the traveller stood before him holding a pistol to his breast.

"Dismount," cried the stranger sternly.

The horseman benumbed and stricken with fear made an effort to reach his arms—but in a moment the hand of the robber quitting the bridle grasped the breast of the rider and dragged him to the ground. He fell heavily on his face, and for several minutes remained senseless. The stranger seized the leathern bag which contained the mail to the north, and flinging it on his shoulder rushed across the heath.

Early on the following morning the inhabitants of Berwick were seen hurrying in groups to the spot where the robbery had been committed, and were scattered in every direction around the moor, but no trace of the robber could be obtained.

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Three days had passed, and Sir John Cochrane yet lived.—The mail which contained his death-warrant had been robbed, and before another order for his execution could be given, the intercession of his father the Earl of Dundonald with the King's confessor might be successful. Grizel now became almost his constant companion in prison, and spoke to him words of comfort. Nearly fourteen days had passed since the robbery of the mail had been committed, and protracted hope in the bosom of the prisoner became more bitter than his first despair. But even that hope bitter as it was perished. The intercession of his father had been unsuccessful—and a second time the bigoted and would be despotic monarch had signed the warrant for his death, and within little more than another day that warrant would reach his prison.

"The will of Heaven be done!" groaned the captive.

"Amen!" returned Grizel with wild vehemence "but my father shall not die!"

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Again the rider with the mail had reached the moor of Tweedmouth, and a second time he bore with him the doom of Cochrane.