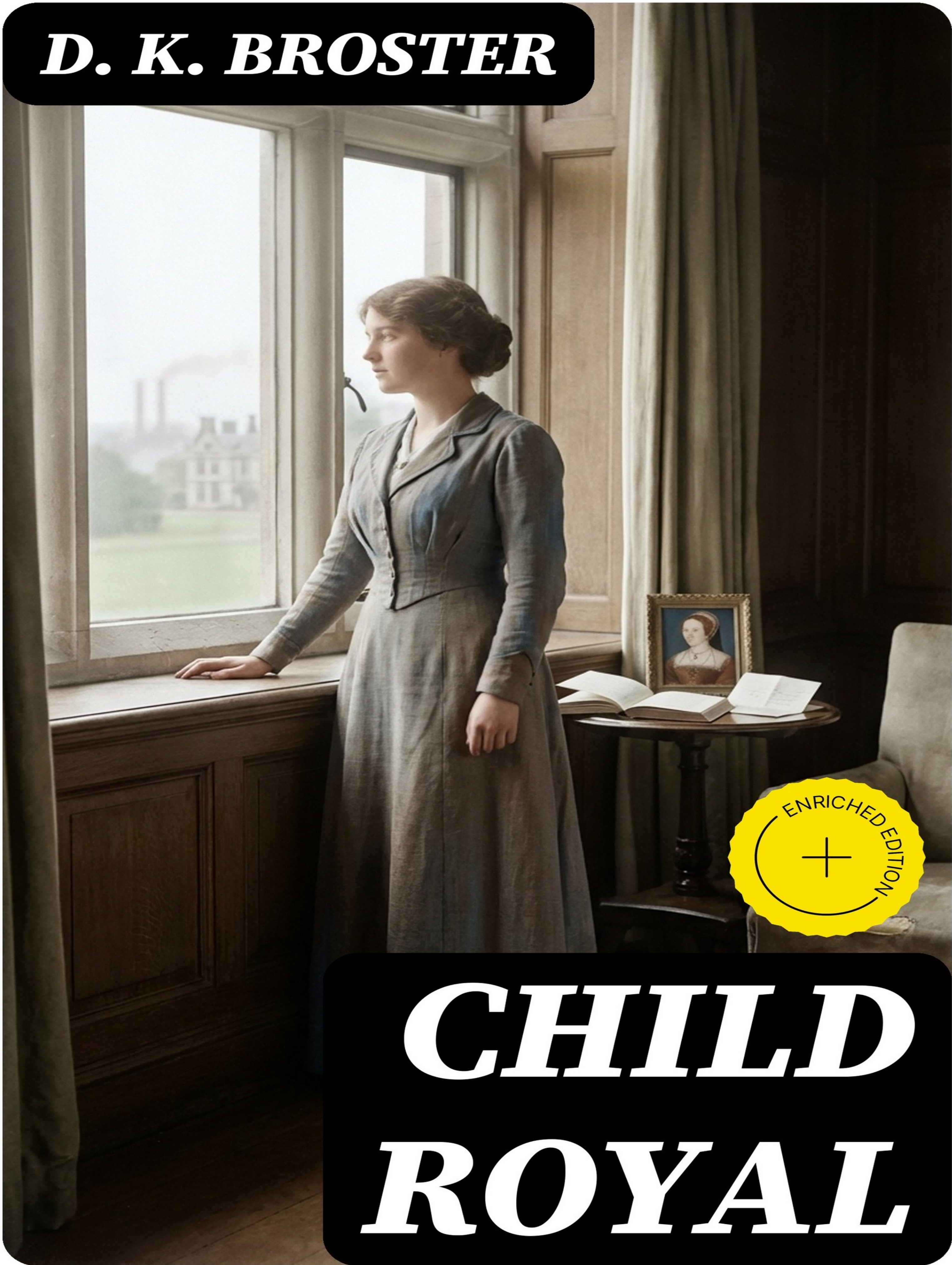
D. K. BROSTER
ENRICHED EDITION
CHILD
ROYAL

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Child Royal

Enriched edition. The Story of Mary Queen of Scots

Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Isla Caldwell

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Introduction

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Child Royal explores the perilous collision of innocence and power, following a young life whose very presence turns private loyalties and public ambitions into contested terrain, where affection must reckon with duty, courage with caution, and truth with the pressure of legend, as individuals who might otherwise pass quietly through history find themselves pressed to choose, to hide, to act, and to answer for those choices in a world that will not slow for childhood nor forgive the adults who gamble with it, while secrecy breeds rumor and exposure courts ruin, sharpening every whisper into a weapon and every silence into a verdict.

First published in the interwar period, Child Royal is a historical novel by the British writer D. K. Broster, whose work is widely associated with rigorously imagined past worlds and clear, disciplined storytelling. The book situates its drama amid a crisis of monarchy and of state, focusing less on courts and proclamations than on the thresholds where policy becomes personal risk. Readers should expect an atmosphere of taut restraint rather than spectacle, and a narrative that favors psychological and moral pressure over sensational display. Without anachronism or ornament for its own sake, Broster's prose privileges clarity, movement, and the slow accumulation of consequence.

The premise is spoiler-safe but potent: news that throws the safety and future of a royal child into doubt sets several lives in motion, drawing together people moved by duty, conscience, fear, and ambition. From that ignition point, the novel traces journeys and encounters in which promises are weighed, confidences exchanged, and identities guarded.

Suspense arises from choices made under watchful eyes—through etiquette, logistics, and the management of appearances—no less than from open peril. The voice is poised and observant, the style economical yet exact, and the tone quietly compassionate without surrendering the unsentimental clarity the material demands.

Formally, Child Royal gains its strength from vantage and pressure. The central figure is often glimpsed through those who surround, pursue, or protect, so that the reader experiences the child's significance as a web of obligations and projections rather than as a single, simplifying narrative. Scenes of negotiation alternate with episodes of compressed urgency, and the book's rhythm is one of incremental tightening rather than relentless acceleration. Broster trusts readers to infer motives from gesture and consequence, cultivating suspense from the friction between secrecy and spectacle, and from the knowledge that even prudent decisions can have irrevocable costs.

At its thematic core, the novel examines legitimacy and identity, the uses and misuses of innocence, and the steep price exacted when public narratives appropriate private lives. Loyalty is never merely a slogan; it is weighed against conscience, affection, survival, and the tug of competing histories. The child's limited agency exposes the adult world's ethical fault lines: guardianship becomes a test of character, and political calculation is revealed as a series of intimate sacrifices and evasions. Broster is attentive to how class, gender, and role constrain action, yet she also traces the quiet moral courage that finds room within those constraints.

Child Royal speaks forcefully to contemporary readers because its questions are enduring ones: who is entitled to speak for the powerless, how do stories about vulnerability become instruments of power, and what happens when myth outpaces fact. In an age alert to the manipulation of images and to the politicization of childhood, the novel's

interest in rumor, reputation, and responsibility feels immediate. It asks what we owe to persons who are symbols to others, and how civic and private ethics intersect when law, custom, and compassion pull in different directions. Its measured intensity invites reflection rather than outrage fatigue.

For readers new to D. K. Broster, this novel offers an accessible entry into historical fiction that privileges human motive over pageantry. The pleasures here are cumulative: the careful calibration of risk, the illumination of character through choice, and the sensation of being led with steady hands through a story that resists easy catharsis. Without depending on prior knowledge, it rewards attentiveness to nuance and silence as much as to action. Child Royal endures because it renders the past with moral immediacy, allowing today’s reader to consider how innocence is protected, deployed, or betrayed—and what those choices say about us.

Synopsis

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Child Royal, a historical novel by D. K. Broster, opens amid the unravelling of monarchy in revolutionary France. The narrative focuses on a young heir removed from a palace world into confinement, watched not for what he has done but for what he represents. Broster establishes the charged atmosphere with economy: the new regime's procedures, the city's vigilance, and the uneasy tact of officials tasked with guarding a child who is a political emblem. Early scenes trace relocation, catalogued possessions, and the rearrangement of a daily life narrowed to walls, routines, and the presence of strangers bearing authority.

Within that restricted space, the child's education becomes an instrument of policy. Zealous keepers interpret their duty as re-making loyalties, while others cling to professional neutrality or private compassion. Broster observes how small gestures—talk, food, stories, the permission or denial of a toy—acquire consequence when everything is watched. The boy's view of the world contracts and then changes color under pressure, yet flashes of habit and memory persist. The central conflict strains between ideology seeking to erase lineage and the stubborn fact of childhood with its rhythms, fears, and needs, a tension Broster renders without sentimentality or sensational cruelty.

A sparse circle forms around the prisoner: a municipal official mindful of regulations, a physician aware of the body's quiet alarms, a servant whose loyalty sits in a perilous light, and guards whose consciences are measured against orders. Their conversations are edged, reported, and sometimes guessed, because nothing happens unobserved.

Some wish only to keep their records clean; others, at cost, try to keep a child whole. Broster maps their intersecting motives without caricature, showing how personal decency or small evasions can matter in a system designed to leave no seams through which mercy might pass.

Beyond the cell, the wider city hums with committee decrees, pamphlets, and rumor. The child's existence—rarely seen—circulates as a symbol whose meaning various factions attempt to fix. Rescue is spoken of in conditional tenses, weighed against informers and the knowledge that even whispers entangle families. Broster threads these outside currents through reports, distant noises, and sudden changes in regulation. The book makes clear how a government's fear of a name can be as potent as an army, and how, for supporters and adversaries alike, the child's survival or erasure would settle more than one contested vision of the nation.

As time lengthens, Broster dwells on the psychology of confinement. Days are tallied by mealtimes and inspections, seasons by drafts and light. The child's health shifts with neglect and attention, and memory becomes both companion and torment. Separation from familiar voices marks scenes of quiet intensity, in which the past's certainties appear and recede like a language half-forgotten. Without melodrama, the novel records tiny resistances—refusals, silences, a game played alone—as well as moments when instruction takes root. The narrowing of space becomes a study in what identity can endure when authority insists on a new vocabulary for every feeling.

Political weather changes, and with it custodians, procedures, and possibilities. A paper may be misfiled, a guard replaced, a doctor granted longer minutes, and such adjustments accumulate into tension. A design to alter the child's situation—whether by transfer, treatment, or something bolder—gathers in guarded conversations and coded looks. Broster raises the stakes carefully, letting the

reader sense outcomes without foreclosing them. Hints of substitution, mistaken recognition, and the power of resemblance flicker at the edges, not as parlour mystery but as the historical imagination's acknowledgement of how easily records blur when fear and hope compress time.

The novel closes on the persistence of a question rather than the satisfaction of an answer. Without violating the record it evokes, Child Royal contemplates how innocence can be weaponized, how systems rationalize harm, and how myths flower around a vacant space in history. Broster's measured prose and close focus ensure that the debate about legitimacy, mercy, and memory remains human-scaled. The book's resonance lies in its refusal to simplify: it recognizes that a child became a nation's argument, and it leaves readers considering the responsibilities owed to symbols who are, first, persons.

Historical Context

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Child Royal is set in early sixteenth-century Scotland, in the immediate aftermath of the Battle of Flodden (9 September 1513), where King James IV and many nobles were killed. His infant son, James V, was crowned within weeks at Stirling, and the kingdom entered a prolonged minority. The landscape of the story spans court and castle, especially strongholds such as Stirling and Edinburgh, through which custody of the young monarch conferred power. Institutions that frame the action include the royal council, the Scottish Parliament of the Estates, and the Church, all grappling with continuity of government after a devastating military defeat.

At first, regency rested with the queen-mother, Margaret Tudor, under the terms of James IV's will and the Estates' assent. Her remarriage in 1514 to Archibald Douglas, 6th Earl of Angus, undermined that position and divided the realm. In 1515 the Estates invited John Stewart, Duke of Albany—next in line and long resident in France—to serve as Governor. The period's governance pivoted between these rival authorities, with the Privy Council, sheriffs, and burgh magistrates maintaining day-to-day order. The Auld Alliance with France, and cautious contacts with England, shaped decisions, while the Catholic Church's hierarchy remained the principal nationwide institution.

Relations with England were tense and strategic. Henry VIII, newly victorious over France in 1513's concurrent campaign, pressed claims through diplomacy and border pressure rather than open invasion. The Anglo-Scottish frontier, administered by March wardens on both sides, saw endemic raiding and negotiation. Peace initiatives intersected with wider European alignments, including the

1518 Treaty of London and Scotland’s 1517 Treaty of Rouen with France. Ambassadors, truces, and safe-conducts governed movement of nobles and envoys, while customs revenues from border trade and the legal duties of the Wardens contributed to a delicate balance between deterrence and accommodation.

French connections permeated politics and culture. Albany’s long residence in France, his periodic returns to the French court, and French military advisers and ships in Scottish service sustained the Auld Alliance. Noble families cultivated ties through marriage, education, and service abroad, while trade with Normandy and Brittany joined routes to the Low Countries and the Baltic. Renaissance tastes filtered into Scotland’s court: pageantry, music, and architecture continued the flourish begun under James IV. The Franco-Scottish alliance, however, also provoked English suspicion, so allegiance to France carried both protection and risk for those guiding the minority government.

Within Scotland, magnate rivalries defined the young king’s fate. The Douglas affinity, strengthened by Archibald Douglas’s marriage to Margaret Tudor, contested influence with Albany’s supporters and other great houses. Control of the royal person conferred legitimacy and access to patronage, so guardianship shifted among custodians and castles. Stirling Castle, with its long role as nursery of Scottish monarchs, and Edinburgh Castle, the seat of the Chancellor, were especially significant. Legal instruments such as bonds of manrent and entail shaped alliances, while councils and parliaments attempted to regularize authority amid feuds, forfeitures, and temporary reconciliations orchestrated in the name of royal peace.

The social and economic backdrop mixed resilience with strain. Royal burghs such as Edinburgh, Dundee, Perth, and Aberdeen managed trade, guild regulation, and taxation, enabling exports of wool, hides, and fish to the Low

Countries and beyond. In the Highlands and Islands, kin-based lordships and Gaelic culture persisted under crown oversight, the Lordship of the Isles having been forfeited in 1493 yet still influencing regional power. Sheriffdoms, regality courts, and justiciar circuits administered law unevenly. Revenues from crown lands and customs were constrained by war losses, compelling reliance on subsidies, forfeitures, and negotiated loans from churchmen and merchants.

Religion and learning framed elite life before the Reformation. The Roman Church organized charity, education, and jurisdiction, with monasteries, collegiate churches, and cathedral chapters central to governance. Universities at St Andrews (founded 1413), Glasgow (1451), and Aberdeen (1495) trained clergy and officials. Print had reached Scotland by 1508, and literary culture flourished: Gavin Douglas completed his Scots translation of Virgil's Aeneid in 1513, while the makars' poetry from James IV's court remained influential. Lutheran ideas began to circulate; Patrick Hamilton would be executed for heresy at St Andrews in 1528, the very year the young king approached effective personal rule.

Broster's novel reflects this era by dramatizing how institutions struggle to protect continuity when sovereignty resides in a child. The narrative foregrounds custody, counsel, and allegiance, illustrating how parliaments, councils, and churches could legitimize power yet fail to prevent coercion by magnates. It also registers Scotland's dual orientation toward France and England and the cultural prestige of learning and ritual at court. With minimal anachronism and careful use of public events, the work interrogates the costs of faction and the responsibilities of guardianship, inviting readers to weigh personal loyalty against the legal and communal claims of the realm.

Child Royal

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To
Miss Jane T. Stoddart

In gratitude, since, without her book on Mary's girlhood, this story would never have been written.

THE PICTURE

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Before the flames so lamentably had their will of Garthrose House in 1896, there used to hang in the hall a small painting which caught the eye at once by its unlikeness to any of the more important-looking and better executed portraits of a later date, the Allan Ramsays, or the Raeburn, or even to the dark-backgrounded family pictures belonging to periods nearer to its own. Childish visitors in particular were sure to be attracted to this painting, and their questions were generally identical in substance: “Why is there another little picture painted inside this picture, please?” “Who is the little girl in it?” “Are the lady and gentleman her father and mother?” Or sometimes it would be, not a query, but a request: “Grandfather, will you show us the funny picture?”

And to the questions Sir Patrick Graham would answer: “No, my dear, the lady and gentleman are not the parents of the little girl; they are my ancestors—and yours as well,” he would add, if the case required it. Then, if the small visitor were below a certain stature, he or she might be lifted up. “Suppose we look closer. You see that crown on the frame of the picture of the little girl? *Now* can’t you guess who she is? ... Mary Queen of Scots when she was quite small, between eight and nine years of age, though she looks a good deal older, doesn’t she, in that stiff bodice and that tight-fitting head-dress? The whole picture was painted when she was a child in France, before she was married to the little boy—the Dauphin—with whom she was brought up, and who became, you know, King Francis II of France.”

“Is that why there is a crown on the frame?”

“No, the crown is there because Mary was a Queen already. She had been Queen of Scots since she was a week old.”

“Did she have to do lessons, like us, when she was little?”

“Indeed she did, and when you go to Paris you will see her Latin exercise-book in the great library there.”

“But did she have toys, too?”

“Yes, and a great many pets, and dresses and jewels, because she was a very important little person, although she was only a child like you.”

“And why are those two people with stiff white things round their necks holding her picture like that?”

“Because they both had to do with her in those days, and they were very fond of her.”

And the child would gaze at that other child whose name at least was familiar, and perhaps her fate, too. The lady and gentleman in the painting, who were Sir Patrick’s ancestors, sat either side of a small table covered with a dark velvet cloth reaching to the floor. They were looking neither at the spectator nor at each other, but towards the oval picture of the little Queen, along the top of which the farthest hand of each was laid, thus holding it upright on the table.

It would probably be an older visitor to Garthrose who would observe further details in this somewhat unusual picture. On the front of the table-cloth was emblazoned a shield with the family quarterings, the scallop-shells and roses, surmounted by the mailed hand holding a rose branch which was the special cognisance of Graham of Garthrose, under the scroll bearing the motto which went with it, *Par heur et malheur*. There was nothing out of the common about this heraldic display, but what was apt to excite a connoisseur’s curiosity was the presence on the floor in the foreground of a sort of plaque, showing the same

shield traversed by the bend sinister of illegitimacy. Near it lay an open letter across which a little snake was crawling.

And to one such visitor old Sir Patrick said with a sigh: “Yes, some fated natures throw an early shadow. Even as a child Queen Mary was, through no fault of her own, the cause of anguish to those who loved her. We had cause enough in my family to know it.... You are familiar with her own chosen motto: *In my end is my beginning*? I sometimes think it should have been reversed.”

“That same thought has come to me before now,” answered his hearer. “There is, of course, a story—a dark story, perhaps—in that enigmatical picture?”

Sir Patrick Graham bent his handsome grey head in assent. “You shall hear it to-night, if you care to.”

THE STORY

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I. ARCHER OF THE GUARD

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(June-December, 1548)—(1)

The dogs were still barking down below in the court-yard, so recent was Ninian’s arrival[1q]. He was not too late; that much he had learnt from old Gib, all a-tremble with agitation and surprise, who had admitted him, and from his young sister Agnes also, now preparing their mother for his visit.

And while he waited in the oriel-windowed chamber overlooking the strath, the wind which had just brought him from France, and which was now sporting with the pennons of Monsieur d’Essé’s fleet[4] in the Firth of Forth, buffeted the House of Garthrose with a good will, and, entering by various imperceptible crannies, set swaying on the wall the tapestry of Queen Semiramis[1] and her train, so familiar to Ninian Graham in his boyhood. Staring at it now, on this June afternoon of 1548, he could scarcely believe that nearly seven years had passed since he had been home to Scotland. When last his eyes had rested on those bannered towers upon the wall, squat and formal behind the casques and spears of the Assyrian warriors, the catastrophe of Solway Moss[2] was yet to come, and the disaster of Pinkie[3] also; Leith and Edinburgh had not yet been sacked, nor hundreds of Border villages destroyed, and Jedburgh and Kelso, Dryburgh and Melrose, those fair abbeys, still stood inviolate. Then, also, the crown of Scotland had rested upon the brow of a King, not, as now, upon that of a little maid of five and a half. The queen in the arras, even though in the act of resigning her diadem to her son, still had the advantage there.

Turning away towards the window, Ninian began to detach his rapier, and, passing through a shaft of the June sunlight which, as it poured through the gules of a blazon in the glass, lay upon his shoulder for a moment like a stain of blood, came into a beam of untempered light—a man in the late thirties, spare, springy and upright. There was a faint touch of grey at his temples, but not a thread of it in the little pointed brown beard which left revealed a mouth more resolute than might well have accompanied eyes so reflective. His high boots were muddy with his fast riding from Leith; dust speckled the grey cloak flung over a chair. He had the bearing and air of the soldier he was, a soldier in alien service—though no Scot held it alien to serve, as he did, in the Scottish Archer Guard of King Henri II of France.

Laying down his sword, the returned exile set one knee upon the window seat, threw open one of the small panes and looked out upon his elder brother's domain. Between the soft green meadows, held in place as they were by the gentle hills on either side, shone the river of his boyhood. He could still rehearse its every curve. Rather more of the countryside was Graham property now, for Robert had extended and improved the lands of Garthrose, though without imagination, as a merchant builds up his business. Yet everything in the prospect before Ninian's eyes spoke to him, as it had always done, of his father, that charming and masterful Malise Graham, who had run so royally through his wealth that, but for the portion of his first wife's dowry secured to her children (and but for Robert's careful husbandry) there would have been little left to keep up Garthrose to-day. Catherine Hepburn, Sir Malise's second wife, had been almost portionless—the main reason for her son's entering foreign service. But this marriage, unlike the first, had been a love match, which was perhaps the reason why Malise Graham had always received from that son a devotion which his occasional brutality had had no power to quench. Yes, everything about Garthrose spoke to Ninian of

his father, though that father was fifteen years dead[2q].... And now Catherine Graham, who had mourned her husband so unremittingly, was following him. It was that news which had brought her son from France to-day.

The sound of the door opening caused Ninian to spring up. It was his half-brother who entered.

About Robert Graham of Garthrose there had never been any of his father's carefree grace and radiance. Stoutish, greying (for he was over fifty), a perpetual harassed frown upon his forehead, he came forward with a quick and heavy tread.

"Ninian! My dear brother!" Despite that troubled look, there was no lack of warmth in his voice as he embraced the traveller. "Ill news has brought you, brother—but a good wind natheless. I'm gey glad to see you again after these many years!"

Ninian returned the greeting as cordially. "And my mother? Agnes tells me——"

Robert shook his head, the frown deepening. "She was anointed this morning. Indeed, Ninian, we thought she would have passed yesterday. You are but just in time."

His brother stifled a sigh. "I wonder will she know me?" he said to himself. Then aloud: "How does your young brood, Robert, wanting their good mother?" For Robert's somewhat shrewish wife had died a couple of years ago, leaving, besides two sons of seventeen and fifteen, a whole nursery of younger folk.

But before Robert could more than touch the fringe of a complete answer to this question, Agnes returned to the room—the sister in whom Ninian had some ado to recognise the child of thirteen who had sat beside him on a stool at his last visit, asking him so many questions about France that their mother had rebuked her. She was a young woman now, in a wide-spreading green gown.

"The news of Ninian's coming hath not distressed your mother?" asked Robert Graham anxiously.

Agnes shook her gentle head. “Nay, for she was looking for it. Indeed, she has recovered her speech, which a while ago we thought gone.... Will you come with me now, Ninian?”

And seeing him glance down at his mud-splashed boots, she added: “Dear brother, *that’s* of small account!”

* * * * *

Was it possible to have become so small and shrunken when one was only fifty-three, and had been fair and fresh-coloured, like the miniature he had of her? In the enclosure of the great curtained bed, Lady Graham was lost, like a grey-haired child with watching eyes. She knew him; that was evident. Shaken with affection and emotion, the Archer knelt by the side of the bed and asked her blessing, kissing the thin hand as it slipped nervelessly from his head.

“Ninian, my dear son!” came the murmur; and again: “My dear, dear son!”

After he had kissed her and was seated by the bedside, she scanned him, for all her weakness, with intense eagerness, motioning for the curtains to be drawn farther apart. Then in her echo of a voice she asked him of his voyage, of his own health, of his circumstances; yet she seemed scarcely to listen to his answers, as she ceaselessly studied his face. And at last she said, less faintly:

“You grow liker your father ... although he was of fair complexion ... liker than Robert is, or his son James.... Doth he not, Agnes? But you scarce remember him, child ... I mind me, before you were born, Ninian, how we used to ride ...”

And from that moment onwards she talked more of her dead husband than of either Ninian or herself; talked of incidents and sayings, pathetic at this hour, which her love had preserved, as in amber. And as the flame sank, so did the mind become confused, till she was speaking of Malise

Graham as though he were alive, but absent. Her hands were twisting feebly together as she murmured, with her eyes fixed on her son's face:

"In France still, woe's me ... with my Lord of Albany.... Bid him hasten home ... hasten home ... Ninian ... he bides too long there ..."

Her eyes wavered, the lids sank; Agnes beckoned Ninian out.

"I have fatigued her," he said remorsefully, once beyond the door.

"No, no. But she wanders in her wits more than of custom. I think the end is not far off. I shall send for Father Sandys."

"Yet she doth not wander so much as you think, Agnes," replied her brother gently. "Our father was in France once with my Lord Albany. He was there for a year, I remember, when I was a boy—years before you were born. 'Tis not so unnatural that, since our mother seems to think of him as still alive, she should fancy him to be in France now, as he is not by her bedside."

(2)

Bewailing the ills of their country at the hands of the English, Robert Graham paced restlessly to and fro in front of the deplenished supper-table at the upper end of the raftered hall. Ninian sat back in his chair listening to him. The servants had some time ago withdrawn from their own table at the lower end, Agnes had quitted her brothers' side for her mother's, and young James and Henry, Robert's two elder sons, had left in obedience to their father's dismissal.

But not before they had been permitted to question their uncle about the famous corps to which he belonged, and which, it appeared, young Henry cherished an idea of joining one day. So Ninian, smiling, had answered: Yes, the Scottish

14 A Renaissance palace in the Eure valley in Normandy built and lavishly decorated for Diane de Poitiers in the mid-16th century, replacing an older medieval fortress; it became famous for its architecture and sculpture.

15 Diane de Poitiers (1499–1566) was the influential mistress of King Henri II of France and a major patron who commissioned and embellished the Château d’Anet.

16 A leading French Renaissance architect (c.1510–1570) employed at Anet; he is known for introducing Northern Renaissance forms into French royal and noble building projects.

17 A prominent French sculptor and designer active in the mid-16th century whose work, including statues and decorative reliefs, helped define French Renaissance sculpture and is mentioned as contributing to Anet.

18 A reference to the Domus Aurea, the vast, ornate palace built by the Roman Emperor Nero in the 1st century AD, often evoked by Renaissance writers as a benchmark of splendour.

19 Part of a Latin inscription quoted in the text associated with a statue at Anet; the surrounding clause ('ut diuturna sui sint monumenta viri') expresses a wish that the monument to the man should endure for a long time.

20 A hugely popular late medieval/early Renaissance chivalric romance (Amadis of Gaul) widely read at European courts and influential on courtly ideals of knighthood and love.

21 A Christian feast day celebrated forty days after Easter commemorating Jesus’s ascension to heaven; it was

commonly observed in 16th-century France with public ceremonies and royal entries.

22 The French port of Boulogne-sur-Mer, here noted as recently returned to French control; historically it was restored to France by the 1550 treaty that ended English occupation in exchange for payment.

23 A French term meaning the 'guardroom' or room used by palace guards and attendants; in Renaissance palaces it was often richly decorated and used for formal access to state apartments.

24 An Italian title mentioned as a popular handbook of divination and moral or mnemonic exercises in the period, used with cards for predicting or reflecting on the future.

25 A town on the Loire in central France known for its royal château; in the 15th–16th centuries Amboise was a frequent royal residence and setting for court life.

26 The longest river in France, running west to the Atlantic; many important towns and royal châteaux (including Amboise) lie on its banks and it was a major transport and ceremonial artery in the period.

27 A contemporary title used for Diane de Poitiers (1499–1566), the powerful longtime mistress of King Henri II of France, who exercised significant influence at court.

28 The title refers to Anne de Montmorency (1493–1567), France’s Constable (the kingdom’s chief military officer) and one of the most powerful nobles of mid-16th-century France.

29 The House of Guise was an influential French noble family (Dukes of Guise) prominent in the mid-1500s and often leaders of a Catholic political faction at court.

30 A marshal of France, a senior military officer; in this period the title is associated with Jacques d'Albon, Seigneur de Saint-André, a leading courtier and royal commander and a close associate of King Henri II.

31 An English order of chivalry founded in the mid-14th century; exchanging its insignia (as described) was a diplomatic and ceremonial act marking high honour between monarchs.

32 A town in Brittany with a Renaissance château owned by the Montmorency family in the 16th century; here it is described as a principal lodging-place for the French court and visiting embassies.

33 A street name in Paris (literally “Street of the Armed Man”); the phrase also recalls the popular Renaissance tune 'L'Homme armé' that inspired many musical settings, though the exact origin of this street-name is not certain.

34 Named in the text as Queen Catherine’s female dwarf; the name (Italian for “the joy”) reflects a practice at early modern courts of keeping dwarfs or entertainers, though specific historical identification is uncertain.

35 A small enclosed bed common in Breton and northern French houses, literally a 'closed bed' with curtains and a wooden box-like surround offering privacy and warmth in crowded dwellings.

36 Here denotes a member of the Scottish Archer Guard, a corps of Scottish archers retained in the French royal household as bodyguards and court troops in the 16th century.

37 A warm drink made from milk curdled with ale or wine and spiced or sweetened, commonly used in early modern

Europe as a restorative or medicinal beverage.

38 A leading French noble and military commander (1493–1567), Constable of France under Henri II, noted for his political power and involvement in military and judicial matters in mid-16th-century France.

39 Used here in a contemporary proverbial sense referring to the Constable’s feared punishments or reprisals (literally 'Our Fathers' prayers'); the exact figurative meaning varies in period sources but implies deadly or punitive consequences.

40 A French court title meaning 'Great Equerry' or Master of the Horse, responsible for the sovereign’s stables, horses and certain ceremonial duties at court.

41 Literally 'Old Castle'; in the scene it denotes the older keep or fortified part of the Château de Châteaubriant used to detain prisoners, as opposed to the newer residence.

42 A reference to the prisons in the city of Nantes (in Brittany), which in the period were used to hold important or political prisoners awaiting trial.

43 French for 'Keeper of the Seals', an official charged with custody of the kingdom’s great seals and important legal or chancery functions, often held by a high judicial officer.

44 The name used in the chapter for the First President of the Parlement of Paris who has been made Garde des Sceaux; he functions as the senior judicial official conducting inquiries and preliminary hearings.

45 An early form of tennis played on a long court (literally 'game of the long palm'), a popular noble pastime in 16th-century France and a forerunner of modern lawn tennis.