CHAPTER XVIII.

LADY JANE.

ALL was quiet in the palace of Whitehall. Even the servants on guard in the vestibule of the king's bed-chamber had been a long time slumbering, for the king had been snoring for several hours; and this majestical sound was, to the dwellers in the palace, the joyful announcement that for one fine night they were exempt from service, and might be free men.

The queen also had long since retired to her apartments, and dismissed her ladies at an unusually early hour. She felt, she said, wearied by the chase, and much needed rest. No one, therefore, was to disturb her, unless the king should order it.

But the king, as we have said, slept, and the queen had no reason to fear that her night's rest would be disturbed.

Deep silence reigned in the palace. The corridors were empty and deserted, the apartments all silent.

Suddenly a figure tripped along softly and cautiously through the long feebly lighted corridor. She was wrapped in a black mantle; a veil concealed her face.

Scarcely touching the floor with her feet, she floated away, and glided down a little staircase. Now she stops and listens. There is nothing to hear; all is noiseless and still.

Then, on again. Now she wings her steps. For here she is sure of not being heard. It is the unoccupied wing of the castle of Whitehall. Nobody watches her here.

On, then, on, adown that corridor, descending those stairs. There she stops before a door leading into the

the writer of it was John Heywood, the epigrammatist and court-jester.—See Dramaturgie oder Theorie und Geschichte der dramatischen Kunst, von Theodore Mundt, vol. i, p. 309. Flogel's Geschichte der Hofnarren, p. 399.

summer-house. She puts her ear to the door, and listens. Then she claps her hands three times.

The sound is reëchoed from the other side.

"Oh, he is there, he is there!" Forgotten now are her cares, forgotten her pains and tears. He is there. She has him again.

She throws open the door. It is dark indeed in the chamber, but *she* sees him, for the eye of love pierces the night; and if she sees him not, yet she feels his presence.

She rests on his heart; he presses her closely to his breast. Leaning on each other, they grope cautiously along through the dark, desolate chamber to the divan at the upper end, and there, both locked in a happy embrace, they sink upon the cushion.

"At last I have you again! and my arms again clasp this divine form, and again my lips press this crimson mouth! Oh, my beloved, what an eternity has this separation been! Six days! Six long nights of agony! Have you not felt how my soul cried out for you, and was filled with trepidation; how I stretched my arms out into the night, and let them fall again disconsolate and trembling with anguish, because they clasped nothing—naught but the cold, vacant night breeze! Did you not hear, my beloved, how I cried to you with sighs and tears, how in glowing dithyrambics I poured forth to you my longing, my love, my rapture? But you, cruel you, remained ever cold, ever smiling. Your eyes were ever flashing in all the pride and grandeur of a Juno. The roses on your cheeks were not one whit the paler. No, no, you have not longed for me; your heart has not felt this painful, blissful anguish. You are first and above all things the proud, cold queen, and next, next the loving woman."

"How unjust and hard you are, my Henry!" whispered she softly. "I have indeed suffered; and perhaps my pains have been more cruel and bitter than yours, for I —I had to let them consume me within. You could pour them forth, you could stretch out your arms after me, you

could utter lamentations and sighs. You were not, like me, condemned to laugh, and to jest, and to listen with apparently attentive ear to all those often heard and constantly repeated phrases of praise and adoration from those about me. You were at least free to suffer. I was not. It is true I smiled, but amidst the pains of death. It is true my cheeks did not blanch, but rouge was the veil with which I covered their paleness; and then, Henry, in the midst of my pains and longings, I had, too, a sweet consolation—your letters, your poems, which fell like the dew of heaven upon my sick soul, and restored it to health, for new torments and new hopes. Oh, how I love them—those poems, in whose noble and enchanting language your love and our sufferings are reëchoed! How my whole soul flew forth to meet them when I received them, and how pressed I my lips thousands and thousands of times on the paper which seemed to me redolent with your breath and your sighs! How I love that good, faithful Jane, the silent messenger of our love! When I behold her entering my chamber, with the unsullied paper in hand, she is to me the dove with the olive-leaf, that brings me peace and happiness, and I rush to her, and press her to my bosom; and give her all the kisses I would give you, and feel how poor and powerless I am, because I cannot repay her all the happiness that she brings me. Ah, Henry, how many thanks do we owe to poor Jane!"

"Why do you call her poor, when she can be near you, always behold you, always hear you?"

"I call her poor, because she is unhappy. For she loves, Henry—she loves to desperation, to madness, and she is not loved. She is pining away with grief and pain, and wrings her hands in boundless woe. Have you not noticed how pale she is, and how her eyes become daily more dim?"

"No, I have not seen it, for I see naught but you, and Lady Jane is to me a lifeless image, as are all other women. But what! You tremble; and your whole frame writhes

in my arms, as if in a convulsion! And what is that? Are you weeping?"

"Oh, I weep, because I am so happy. I weep, because I was thinking how fearful the suffering must be, to give the whole heart away, and receive nothing in return, naught but death! Poor Jane!"

"What is she to us? We, we love each other. Come, dear one, let me kiss the tears from your eyes; let me drink this nectar, that it may inspire me, and transfigure me to a god! Weep no more—no, weep not; or, if you will do so, be it only in the excess of rapture, and because word and heart are too poor to hold all this bliss!"

"Yes, yes, let us shout for joy; let us be lost in blessedness!" exclaimed she passionately, as with frantic violence she threw herself on his bosom.

Both were now silent, mutely resting on each other's heart.

Oh, how sweet this silence; how entrancing this noiseless, sacred night! How the trees without there murmur and rustle, as if they were singing a heavenly lullaby to the lovers! how inquisitively the pale crescent moon peeps through the window, as though she were seeking the twain whose blessed confidante she is!

But happiness is so swift-winged, and time flies so fast, when love is their companion!

Even now they must part again—now they must again say farewell.

"Not yet, beloved, stay yet! See, the night is still dark; and hark, the castle clock is just striking two. No, go not yet."

"I must, Henry, I must; the hours are past in which I can be happy."

"Oh, you cold, proud soul! Does the head already long again for the crown; and can you wait no longer for the purple to again cover your shoulders? Come, let me kiss your shoulder; and think now, dear, that my crimson lips are also a purple robe."

"And a purple robe for which I would gladly give my crown and my life!" cried she, with the utmost enthusiasm, as she folded him in her arms.

"Do you love me, then? Do you really love me?"

"Yes, I love you!"

"Can you swear to me that you love no one except me?"

"I can swear it, as true as there is a God above us, who hears my oath."

"Bless you for it, you dear, you only one—oh, how shall I call you?—you whose name I may not utter! Oh, do you know that it is cruel never to name the name of the loved one? Withdraw that prohibition; grudge me not the painfully sweet pleasure of being able at least to call you by your name!"

"No," said she, with a shudder; "for know you not that the sleep-walkers awake out of their dreams when they are called by name? I am a somnambulist, who, with smiling courage, moves along a dizzy height; call me by name, and I shall awake, and, shuddering, plunge into the abyss beneath. Ah, Henry, I hate my name, for it is pronounced by other lips than yours. For you I will not be named as other men call me. Baptize me, my Henry; give me another name—a name which is our secret, and which no one knows besides us."

"I name you *Geraldine;* and as Geraldine I will praise and laud you before all the world. I will, in spite of all these spies and listeners, repeat again and again that I love you, and no one, not the king himself, shall be able to forbid me."

"Hush!" said she, with a shudder, "speak not of him! Oh, I conjure you, my Henry, be cautious; think that you have sworn to me ever to think of the danger that threatens us, and will, without doubt, dash us in pieces if you, by only a sound, a look, or a smile, betray the sweet secret that unites us two. Are you still aware what you have sworn to me?"

"I am aware of it! But it is an unnatural Draconian law. What! even when I am alone with you, shall I never be allowed to address you otherwise than with that reverence and restrain which is due the queen? Even when no one can hear us, may I, by no syllable, by none, not the slightest intimation, remind you of our love?"

"No, no, do it not; for this castle has everywhere eyes and ears, and everywhere are spies and listeners behind the tapestry; behind the curtains; everywhere are they concealed and lurking, watching every feature, every smile, every word, whether it may not afford ground for suspicion. No, no, Henry; swear to me by our love that you will never, unless here in this room, address me otherwise than your queen. Swear to me that, beyond these walls, you will be to me only the respectful servant of your queen, and at the same time the proud earl and lord, of whom it is said that never has a woman been able to touch his heart. Swear to me that you will not, by a look, by a smile, by even the gentlest pressure of the hand, betray what beyond this room is a crime for both of us. Let this room be the temple of our love; but when we once pass its threshold, we will not profane the sweet mysteries of our happiness, by allowing unholy eyes to behold even a single ray of it. Shall it be so, my Henry?"

"Yes, it shall be so!" said he, with a troubled voice; "although I must confess that this dreadful illusion often tortures me almost to death. Oh, Geraldine, when I meet you elsewhere, when I observe the eye so icy and immovable, with which you meet my look, I feel as it were my heart convulsed; and I say to myself: 'This is not she, whom I love—not the tender, passionate woman, whom in the darkness of the night I sometimes lock in my arms. This is Catharine, the queen, but not my loved one. A woman cannot so disguise herself; art goes not so far as to falsify the entire nature, the innermost being and life of a person.' Oh, there have been hours, awful, horrible hours, when it seemed to me as though all this were a

delusion, a mystification—as though in some way an evil demon assumed the queen's form by night to mock me, poor frenzied visionary, with a happiness that has no existence, but lives only in my imagination. When such thoughts come to me, I feel a frenzied fury, a crushing despair, and I could, regardless of my oath and even the danger that threatens you, rush to you, and, before all the courtly rabble and the king himself, ask: 'Are you really what you seem? Are you, Catharine Parr, King Henry's wife—nothing more, nothing else than that? Or are you, my beloved, the woman who is mine in her every thought, her every breath; who has vowed to me eternal love and unchanging truth; and whom I, in spite of the whole world, and the king, press to my heart as my own?'"

"Unhappy man, if you ever venture that, you doom us both to death!"

"Be it so, then! In death you will at least be mine, and no one would longer dare separate us, and your eyes would no longer look so cold and strangely upon me, as they often now do. Oh, I conjure you, gaze not upon me at all, if you cannot do it otherwise than with those cold, proud looks, that benumb my heart. Turn away your eyes, and speak to me with averted face."

"Then, men will say that I hate you, Henry."

"It is more agreeable to me for them to say you abhor me than for them to see that I am wholly indifferent to you; that I am to you nothing more than the Earl of Surrey, your lord chamberlain."

"No, no, Henry. They shall see that you are more to me than merely that. Before the whole assembled court I will give you a token of my love. Will you then believe, you dear, foolish enthusiast, that I love you, and that it is no demon that rests here in your arms and swears that she loves nothing but you? Say, will you then believe me?"

"I will believe you! But no, there is no need of any sign, or any assurance. Nay, I know it; I feel indeed the

sweet reality that cuddles to my side, warm, and filling me with happiness; and it is only the excess of happiness that makes me incredulous."

"I will convince you thoroughly; and you shall doubt no more, not even in the intoxication of happiness. Listen, then. The king, as you know, is about to hold a great tournament and festival of the poets, and it will take place in a few days. Now, then, at this fête I will publicly, in the presence of the king and his court, give you a rosette that I wear on my shoulder, and in the silver fringe of which you will find a note from me. Will that satisfy you, my Henry?"

"And do you still question it, my dear? Do you question it, when you will make me proud and happy above all others of your court?"

He pressed her closely to his heart and kissed her. But suddenly she writhed in his arms, and started up in wild alarm.

"Day is breaking, day is breaking! See there! a red streak is spreading over the clouds. The sun is coming; day is coming, and already begins to dawn."

He endeavored to detain her still; but she tore herself passionately away, and again enveloped her head in her veil.

"Yes," said he, "day is breaking and it is growing light! Let me then, for a moment at least, see your face. My soul thirsts for it as the parched earth for the dew. Come, it is light here at the window. Let me see your eyes."

She tore herself vehemently away. "No, no, you must begone! Hark, it is already three o'clock. Soon everything will be astir in the castle. Did it not seem as if some person passed by the door here? Haste, haste, if you do not wish me to die of dread!" She threw his cloak over him; she drew his hat over his brow; then once more she threw her arms around his neck and pressed on his lips a burning kiss.

"Farewell, my beloved! farewell, Henry Howard! When we see each other again to-day, you are the Earl of Surrey, and I, the queen—not your loved one—not the woman who loves you! Happiness is past, and suffering awakes anew. Farewell."

She herself opened the glass door, and pushed her lover out.

"Farewell, Geraldine; good-night, my dear! Day comes, and I again greet you as my queen, and I shall have to endure again the torture of your cold looks and your haughty smiles."

CHAPTER XIX.

LOYOLA'S GENERAL.

She rushed to the window and gazed after him till he had disappeared, then she uttered a deep cry of anguish, and, wholly overcome by her agony, she sank down on her knees weeping and wailing, wringing her hands, and raising them to God.

But just before so happy and joyful, she was now full of woe and anguish; and bitter sighs of complaint came trembling from her lips.

"Oh, oh," moaned she, with sobs; "what terrible agonies are these, and how full of despair the anguish that lacerates my breast! I have lain in his arms; I have received his vows of love and accepted his kisses; and these vows are not mine, and these kisses he gave not to me. He kissed me, and he loves in me only *her* whom I hate. He lays his hands in mine and utters vows of love which he dedicates to her. He thinks and feels for her only—her alone. What a terrible torture this is! To be loved under her name; under her name to receive the vows of love that yet belong to me only—to me alone! For he

loves me, me exclusively. They are my lips that he kisses, my form that he embraces; to me are addressed his words and his letters; and it is I that reply to them. He loves me, me only, and yet he puts no faith in me. I am nothing to him, naught but a lifeless image, like other women. This he has told me; and I did not become frenzied; and I had the cruel energy to pass off the tears wrung from me by despair, for tears of rapture. Oh, detestable, horrible mockery of fate—to be what I am not, and not to be what I am!"

And with a shrill cry of agony she tore her hair, and with her fist smote upon her breast, and wept and moaned aloud.

She heard naught; she saw naught; she felt naught but her inexpressible and despairing anguish.

She did not once tremble for herself; she thought not at all of this—that she would be lost if she were found in this place.

And yet at the other side of the room a door had opened, softly and noiselessly, and a man had entered.

He shut the door behind him and walked up to Lady Jane, who still lay on the floor. He stood behind her while she uttered her despairing lamentation. He heard every word of her quivering lips; her whole heart painfully convulsed and torn with grief lay unveiled before him; and she knew it not.

Now he bent over her; and with his hand he lightly touched her shoulder. At this touch she gave a convulsive start, as if hit by the stroke of a sword, and her sobbing was immediately silenced.

An awful pause ensued. The woman lay on the floor motionless, breathless, and near her, tall and cold as a figure of bronze, stood the man.

"Lady Jane Douglas," said he then, sternly and solemnly, "stand up. It becomes not your father's daughter to be upon her knees, when it is not God to whom she kneels. But you are not kneeling to God, but to an idol,

which you yourself have made, and to which you have erected a temple in your heart. This idol is called '*Your own personal misfortune.*' But it is written, 'Thou shalt have no other Gods but me.' Therefore I say to you once more, Lady Jane Douglas, rise from your knees, for it is not your God to whom you kneel."

And as though these words exercised a magnetic power over her, she raised herself up slowly from the floor, and now stood there before her father, stern and cold as a statue of marble.

"Cast from you the sorrows of this world, which burden you, and hinder you in the sacred work which God has imposed on you!" continued Earl Douglas in his metallic, solemn voice. "It is written, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' saith our God. But you, Jane, you are to throw down your trouble at the foot of the throne; and your burden will become a crown that will glorify your head."

He laid his hand on her head, but she wildly shook it off.

"No," cried she, with heavy, faltering tongue, as if confused in a dream. "Away with this crown! I wish no crown upon which devils have laid a spell. I wish no royal robe that has been dyed crimson with the blood of my beloved."

"She is still in the delirium of her anguish," muttered the earl, as he contemplated the pale, trembling woman who had now sunk again to her knees, and was staring straight before her with eyes bewildered and stretched wide open. But the looks of the earl remained cold and unmoved, and not the least compassion was aroused in him for his poor daughter, now penetrated with anguish.

"Arise," said he, in a hard, steelly voice. "The Church, by my mouth, commands you to serve her as you have vowed to do; that is to say, with glad heart and a sense of your reliance on God; that is to say, with smiling lips and a serene, beaming eye, as becomes a disciple inspired by faith, and as you have sworn to do in the hands of our lord and master, Ignatius Loyola."

"I cannot! I cannot!" moaned she, in a low tone. "I cannot be glad at heart when despair, like a wild boar, is rending my heart; I cannot command my eye to shine when my eyes are dimmed with tears of anguish. Oh, have pity, have compassion! Remember that you are my father; that I am your daughter—the daughter of a wife whom you loved, and who would find in the grave no rest if she knew how you are racking and torturing me. My mother, my mother, if thy spirit is near me, come and protect me. Let thy mild looks overshadow my head, and breathe a breath of thy love into the heart of this cruel father, who is ready to sacrifice his child on the altar of his God."

"God has called me," said the earl, "and, like Abraham, I too will learn to obey. But I will not adorn my victim with flowers, but with a royal crown. I will not plunge a knife into her breast, but will put a golden sceptre into her hand and say: Thou art a queen before men, but before God be thou a faithful and obedient servant. Thou hast all to command. But the holy Church, to whose service thou hast consecrated thyself, and who will bless thee if thou art faithful, who will dash thee in pieces with her curse if thou darest deal treacherously, she commands thee. No, you are not my daughter, but the priestess of the Church, consecrated to her holy service. No, I have no sympathy with your tears and this anguish, for I see the end of these sorrows, and I know that these tears will be as a diadem of pearls about your temples. Lady Jane Douglas, it is the saintly Loyola who sends you his commands by my mouth. Obey them, not because I am your father, but because I am the general to whom you have sworn obedience and fidelity unto your life's end."

"Then kill me, my father!" said she, feebly. "Let this life end, which is but a torture, a protracted martyrdom. Punish me for my disobedience by plunging your

dagger deep into my breast. Punish me, and grudge me not the repose of the grave."

"Poor enthusiast!" said the father; "suppose you, we would be foolish enough to subject you to so light a punishment! No, no, if you dare, in insolent disobedience, rebel against my commands, your penance shall be a terrible one, and your punishment without end. I will not kill *you*, but *him* whom you love; it will be his head that falls; and you will be his murderess. He shall die on the scaffold and you—you shall live in disgrace."

"Oh, horrible!" groaned Jane, as she buried her face in her hands.

Her father continued: "Silly, short-sighted child, who thought she could play with the sword, and did not see that she herself might feel the stroke of this double-edged blade! You wanted to be the servant of the Church, that you might thereby become mistress of the world. You would acquire glory, but this glory must not singe your head with its fiery rays. Silly child! he who plays with fire will be consumed. But we penetrated your thoughts and the wish of which you yourself were unconscious. We looked into the depths of your being, and when we found love there, we made use of love for our own purposes and your salvation. What do you bewail, then, and why do you weep? Have we not allowed you to love? Have we not authorized you to give yourself entirely up to this love? Do you not call yourself Earl Surrey's wife, though you cannot name to me the priest that married you? Lady Jane, obey, and we envy you not the happiness of your love; dare to rebel against us, and disgrace and shame overtake you, and you shall stand before all the world disowned and scoffed at; you the strumpet, that——"

"Stop, my father!" cried Jane, as she sprang vehemently from the floor. "Desist from your terrible words if you do not wish me to die of shame. Nay, I submit, I obey! You are right, I cannot draw back."

"And why would you either? Is it not a life pleasant

and full of enjoyment? Is it not rare good fortune to see our sins transfigured to virtue; to be able to account earthly enjoyment the service of Heaven? And what do you bewail then? That he does not love you? Nay, he does love you; his vows of love still echo in your ears; your heart still trembles with the fruition of happiness. What matters it if the Earl of Surrey with his inward eyes sees the woman he folds in his arms to be another than you? Yet in reality he loves but you alone. Whether you are for him *named* Catharine Parr or Jane Douglas, it is all the same if you only *are* his love."

"But a day will come when he will discover his mistake, and when he will curse me."

"That day will never come. The holy Church will find a way to avert that, if you bow to her will and are obedient to her."

"I do bow to it!" sighed Jane. "I will obey; only promise me, my father, that no harm shall happen to *him;* that I shall not be his murderess."

"No, you shall become his savior and deliverer. Only you must fulfil punctually the work I commit to you. First of all, then, tell me the result of your meeting to-day. He does not doubt that you are the queen?"

"No, he believes it so firmly that he would take the sacrament on it. That is to say, he believes it now because I have promised him to give him publicly a sign by which he may recognize that it is the queen that loves him."

"And this sign?" inquired her father, with a look beaming with joy.

"I have promised him that at the great tournament, the queen will give him a rosette, and that in that rosette he will find a note from the queen."

"Ah, the idea is an admirable one!" exclaimed Lord Douglas, "and only a woman who wishes to avenge herself could conceive it. So, then, the queen will become her own accuser, and herself give into our hands a proof of her

guilt. The only difficulty in the way is to bring the queen, without arousing her suspicion, to wear this rosette, and to give it to Surrey."

"She will do it if I beg her to do so, for she loves me; and I shall so represent it to her that she will do it as an act of kindness to me. Catharine is good-natured and agreeable, and cannot refuse a request."

"And I will apprise the king of it. That is to say, I shall take good care not to do this myself, for it is always dangerous to approach a hungry tiger in his cage and carry him his food, because he might in his voracity very readily devour our own hand together with the proffered meat."

"But how?" asked she with an expression of alarm. "Will he content himself with punishing Catharine alone; will he not also crush him—him whom he must look upon as her lover?"

"He will do so. But you yourself shall save him and set him free. You shall open his prison and give him freedom, and he will love you—you, the savior of his life."

"Father, father, it is a hazardous game that you are playing; and it may happen that you will become thereby your daughter's murderer. For, listen well to what I tell you; if *his* head falls, I die by my own hands; if you make me his murderess, you become thereby mine; and I will curse you and execrate you in hell! What to me is a royal crown if it is stained with Henry Howard's blood? What care I for renown and honor, if he is not there to see my greatness, and if his beaming eyes do not reflect back to me the light of my crown? Protect him, therefore; guard his life as the apple of your eye, if you wish me to accept the royal crown that you offer me, so that the King of England may become again a vassal of the Church!"

"And that the whole of devout Christendom may praise Jane Douglas, the pious queen who has succeeded in the holy work of bringing the rebellious and recreant son of the Church, Henry the Eighth, back to the Holy

Father in Rome, to the only consecrated lord of the Church, truly penitent. On, on, my daughter; do not despond. A high aim beckons you, and a brilliant fortune awaits you! Our holy mother, the Church, will bless and praise you, and Henry the Eighth will declare you his queen."

CHAPTER XX.

THE PRISONER.

STILL all was calm and quiet in the palace of Whitehall. Nothing was stirring, and nobody had heard how Lady Jane Douglas left her chamber and glided down the corridor.

No one has heard it, and no eye is awake, and none sees what is now taking place in the queen's room.

She is alone—all alone. The servants are all asleep in their chambers. The queen herself has bolted the doors of the anteroom on the inside, and no other door leads into her boudoir and bedroom, except through this anteroom. She is therefore perfectly secluded, perfectly secure.

Speedily and in haste she envelops herself in a long black mantle, the hood of which she draws well over her head and brow, and which completely covers and conceals her form.

And now she presses on a spring inserted in the frame of a picture. The picture flies back and shows an opening, through which a person can quite conveniently pass out.

Catharine does so. Then she carefully pushes the picture back to its place from the outside, and for a long time walks on in the passage hollowed out of the solid wall, till groping along she at last lays hold again of a knob in the wall. She presses on it; and now at her feet