

James Hogg (1770-1835)

1 *The Death of Douglas*

Lord of Liddisdale

The Ladye Douglas lefte hir bouir,  
And aye sae loud as scho did call,  
“Tis all for guid Lord Liddisdale  
Thatte I do lette these tearis downe fall.”

“O hald your tongue, my sister deare, 5  
And of your weepyng lette mee be:  
Lord Liddisdale will hald hys owne  
With ony lord of Chrystendye.

“Forre him yee wadna weipe or pyne, 10  
Yffe yee hadde seene, whatte I did see,  
Thatte daye hee broke the troops of Tyne,  
With gylded sword of mettil free.

“Stout Hazelburne wals movit with rage  
To see hys faintyng vassalis yelde;  
And hande to hande hee did engage 15  
Lord Liddisdale uponne the fielde.

“Avaunte, thou haughtye Scotte,” hee cried,  
“And homewarde to thy countrye turne;  
Say, wilt thou brave the deadlye brande,  
And heavvye hande of Hazelburne? 20

“The word hadde scarcely mixt with ayre,  
When Douglas’ sworde sharpe answer gae;  
And frae ane wounde baithe deipe and sair  
Furth fledde the Southron’s soule awaye.

“Madde Faucette next, with woundis transfixt, 25  
In anguish gnawit the bluidye claye;  
Then Hallynshedde hee wheilit and fledde,  
And lefte hys riche ill-gottyn prey.

“I hae beene easte, I hae beene weste,  
I hae seene dangyrs manie a ane; 30  
But for ane baulde and dauntlesse breiste,  
Lord Liddisdale will yielde to nane.

“And were I called to face the fae,  
And bidden chuse my leader free,  
Lord Liddisdale should be the man 35  
To lead me onne to victorie.”

“O hald your tongue, my brother Johnne!  
Though I haif heard you patientlye,  
Lord Liddisdale is deide and gone,  
And he wals slainn forre lofe of mee. 40

“My littyl trew and trustye page  
Has brocht the heavvye newis to mee,  
Thatte my ainne lord diddye hym engage,  
Where he could nouter fighte nor fle.

“Four of the foremoste menne hee slew, 45  
And four hee woundit desp’ratelye,  
But cruel Douglas came behynde,  
And ranne hym through the fayre bodye.

“O wae be to thee, Agel’s wodde,  
O wae be to thee, Willaimis lee; 50  
O wae be to the dastarde croud  
That murderit the flouir of chivalrye!

“It walsna rage forre Ramseye slainn,  
Thatte raisit the deadlie feid sae hie;  
Nor perjured Berkeley’s tymelesse death — 55  
It wals for kyndnesse shown to mee.

“When I wals ledde through Liddisdale,  
And thirty horsemen guardyng me;  
When thatte gude lord came to my ayde,  
Sae soon as he did sette mee free. 60

“The wylde burdis sang, the woodlandis rang,  
And sweit the sunne shonne onne the vae;  
Then thynkna ye, my heart wals wae  
To parte with gentle Liddisdale?”

“But I will greit forre Liddisdale, 65  
Untyl my twa black eyne rinne dry;  
And I will wayl forre Liddisdale,  
Als lang als I hae voyce to cry.

“And for that guid lord I will sigh, 70  
Untyl my heart and spirit fayl;  
And when I die, O bury mee,  
Onne the lefte syde of Liddisdale.”

“Now hald your tongue, my syster deare,  
Your grief will cause baithe dule and shame;  
Synce ye were fause in sic ane cause, 75  
The Douglas’ rage I canna blame.”

“Gae stemm the bytter norlan gale;  
Gae bid the wylde wave cease to rowe;  
I’ll owne my lofe for Liddisdale,  
Afore the kyng, my lorde and you.” 80

He drew hys sword of nutte-browne steele,  
While neid-fyre kyndlit in hys ee,  
“Renounce thy lofe, dishoneste dame,  
Or thy proud kyn avengit shalle bee!”

Scho threw hyr lockis back frae hyr cheike, 85  
And she frownit and leuch loud laughteris three;  
“When thou and my lord gies me law,  
There’ll be nae mae botte hym and thee.”

“Suche als thy pryde so bee thy meed;  
The deide hadde never beene donne by mee, 90  
But the Douglas’ name it brookis no shame,” —  
And hee ranne hyr through the fayre bodye.

Scho dypt her fynger in hyr heartis bleide,

It wals ane brichte and ane scarlett dye;  
And scho lookit wyldlye in hys face, 95  
And scho lookit wyldlye to the sky.

“O thou haste donne ane manlye deide,  
In bluidye letteris itt muste stande;  
But I’ll sett my mark onne thy forheid,  
And I’ll put my mark onne thy rychte hande: 100

“And I’ll give thee the curse of chyldlynesse,  
And I mark it onne thy ruthlys brow;  
And envy and pryde thy hande shalle guide,  
Untyl thou be als I am now.

“And I telle it thee before the sunne, 105  
And God shalle wytnesse yffe I lie,  
The streime of thy lyfe is neirly runne,  
My name shalle live, but thyne shalle die.”

“Chryste sende thee succour, my faire syster,  
And trew may thy wordis of bodyng bee; 110  
Yffe there is ane leech in Scotlande can,  
Hee shall cure thy woundis rychte suddenlye.

“Forre yffe thou die’st, my syster deire,  
My daies of peice onne earthe are donne;  
I shalle never taste of comferte here, 115  
But weipe and wayl beneathe the sonne.

“And yffe thou die’st, my fayre syster,  
I shall seike remissioun in Italie,  
And kneile in the holye sepulchre,  
Before my bones shalle reste with thee.” 120

But ere seiven lang monthis were come and gane,  
Thatte ladyis wordis were provit to stande,  
Forre thatte knychte wals rowit in his wyndinge sheit,  
But scho wals the fayrest of all the lande.

And mony a lord in lofe did pyne, 125  
Forre hyr eyne the heartis of all men drewe,

And mony a hosbande scho hathe slayne,  
And evir and anon gotte newe.

All you who lovethe weirdlye deidis  
Beware of ladyis wytchinge harme, 130  
For litand sturte, and stryffe it breidis,  
And it slackenis the herte, and slymmis the arme.

Unto ane yonge manne of mettil brychte,  
It workethe payne and deidlye skaithe;  
But to ane oulde and dotard wuchte, 135  
Womyn is worse than helle beneathe.

*1807*

(From *The Works of the Ettrick Shepherd*. With Memoir of  
the Author by the Rev. Thomas Thomson. London: Blackie  
& Son, 1876)