

Such sweetness and such grief to join!
Lest I forget the voice of Fame,
And only list to Love's and thine.

"Flow, flow, my tears, unbounded gush! 65
Rise, rise, my sobs! I set ye free;
Bleed, bleed, my heart! I need not blush
To own, that life is dear to me.

"The wretch, whose lips have press'd the bowl, 70
The bitter bowl of pain and woe,
May careless reach his mortal goal,
May boldly meet the final blow:

"His hopes destroyed, his comfort wreckt,
A happier life he hopes to find;
But what can I in heaven expect, 75
Beyond the bliss I leave behind?

"Oh, no! the joys of yonder skies
To prosperous love present no charms;
My heaven is placed in Eva's eyes,
My paradise in Eva's arms. 80

"Yet mark me, sweet! if Heaven's command
Hath doom'd my fall in martial strife,
Oh! let not anguish tempt thy hand
To rashly break the thread of life!

"No! let our boy thy care engross, 85
Let him thy stay, thy comfort, be;
Supply his luckless father's loss,
And love him for thyself and me.

"So may oblivion soon efface
The grief, which clouds this fatal morn;
And soon thy cheeks afford no trace 90
Of tears, which fall for Agilthorn!"

He said, and couch'd his quivering lance;
He said, and braced his moony shield;

Seal'd a last kiss, threw a last glance, 95
Then spurr'd his steed to Flodden Field.

But Eva, of all joy bereft,
Stood rooted at the castle gate,
And view'd the prints his courser left,
While hurrying at the call of fate. 100

Forebodings sad her bosom told,
The steed, which bore him thence so light,
Her longing eyes would ne'er behold
Again bring home her own true knight.

While many a sigh her bosom heaves, 105
She thus address'd her orphan page —
“Dear youth, if e'er my love relieved
The sorrows of thy infant age;

“If e'er I taught thy locks to play,
Luxuriant, round thy blooming face; 110
If e'er I wiped thy tears away,
And bade them yield to smiles their place:

“Oh! speed thee, swift as steed can bear,
Where Flodden groans with heaps of dead,
And, o'er the combat, home repair, 115
And tell me how my lord has sped.

“Till thou return'st, each hour's an age,
An age employ'd in doubt and pain;
Oh! haste thee, haste, my little foot-page,
Oh! haste, and soon return again!” 120

“Now, lady dear, thy grief assuage!
Good tidings soon shall ease thy pain:
I'll haste, I'll haste, thy little foot-page
I'll haste and soon return again.”

Then Oswy bade his courser fly; 125
But still, while hapless Eva wept,
Time scarcely seemed his wings to ply,

So slow the tedious moments crept.

And oft she kiss'd her baby's cheek,
Who slumber'd on her throbbing breast; 130
And now she bade the warder speak,
And now she lull'd her child to rest.

"Good warder, say, what meets thy sight?
What see'st thou from the castle tower?"
"Nought but the rocks of Elginbright, 135
Nought but the shades of Forest-Bower."

"Oh! pretty babe! thy mother's joy,
Pledge of the purest, fondest flame,
To-morrow's sun, dear helpless boy!
Must see thee bear an orphan's name. 140

"Perhaps, e'en now, some Scottish sword
The life-blood of thy father drains;
Perhaps, e'en now, that heart is gored,
Whose streams supplied thy little veins.

"O! warder, from the castle tower, 145
Now say, what objects meet thy sight?"
"None but the shades of Forest-Bower,
None but the rocks of Elginbright."

"Smil'st thou, my babe? so smiled thy sire,
When gazing on his Eva's face; 150
His eyes shot beams of gentle fire,
And joy'd such beams in mine to trace.

"Sleep, sleep, my babe! of care devoid;
Thy mother breathes this fervent vow —
Oh! never be thy soul employed 155
On thoughts so sad as hers are now!

"Now warder, warder, speak again!
What see'st thou from the turret's height?"
"Oh! lady, speeding o'er the plain,
The little foot-page appears in sight." 160

Quick beat her heart; short grew her breath;
Close to her breast the babe she drew —
“Now, Heaven,” she cried, “for life or death!”
And forth to meet the page she flew.

“And is thy lord from danger free? 165
And is the deadly combat o’er?”
In silence Oswy bent his knee,
And laid a scarf her feet before.

The well-known scarf with blood was stain’d,
And tears from Oswy’s eye-lids fell; 170
Too truly Eva’s heart explain’d,
What meant those silent tears to tell.

“Come, come, my babe!” she wildly cried,
“We needs must seek the field of woe;
Come, come, my babe! cast fear aside! 175
To dig thy father’s grave we go.”

“Stay, lady, stay! a storm impends;
Lo! threatening clouds the sky o’erspread;
The thunder roars, the rain descends,
And lightning streaks the heavens with red. 180

“Hark! hark! the winds tempestuous rave!
Oh! be thy dread intent resign’d!
Or, if resolved the storm to brave,
Be this dear infant left behind!”

“No! no! with me my baby stays; 185
With me he lives; with me he dies;
Flash, lightnings, flash! your friendly blaze
Will show me where my warrior lies.”

O see! she roams the bloody field,
And wildly shrieks her husband’s name; 190
O see! she stops and eyes a shield,
A heart, the symbol, wrapt in flame.

His armour broke in many a place,
A knight lay stretch'd that shield beside;
She raised his vizor, kiss'd his face, 195
Then on his bosom sunk, and died.

Huntsman, their rustic grave behold:
'Tis here, at night, the Fairy king,
Where sleeps the fair, where sleeps the bold,
Oft forms his light fantastic ring. 200

'Tis here, at eve, each village youth,
With freshest flowers the turf adorns;
'Tis here he swears eternal truth,
By Eva's faith and Agilthorn's.

And here the virgins sadly tell, 205
Each seated by her shepherd's side,
How brave the gallant warrior fell,
How true his lovely lady died.

Ah! gentle huntsman, pitying hear,
And mourn the gentle lover's doom; 210
Oh! gentle huntsman, drop a tear,
And dew the turf of Eva's tomb!

So ne'er may fate thy hopes oppose;
So ne'er may grief to thee be known:
They, who can weep for others' woes, 215
Should ne'er have cause to weep their own.

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