

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Earl Bothwell

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1 Woe worth thee, woe worth thee, false Scottlande!
for thou hast euer wrought by a sleight:
For the worthyest prince that euer was borne,
You hanged vnder a cloud by night.

2 The Queene of France a letter wrote,
And sealed itt with hart and ringe,
And bade him come Scottlalld within,
And shee wold marry him and crowne him king.

3 To be a king, itt is a pleasant thing,
To bee a prince vnto a peere;
But you haue heard, and so haue I too,
A man my well by gold to deere.

4 There was an Italyan in that place,
Was as wel beloued as euer was hee;
Lord David was his name,
Chamberlaine vnto the queene was hee.

5 for if the king had risen forth of his place,
He weld haue sitt him downe in the cheare,
And tho itt beseemed him not soe well,
Altho the king had beene present there.

6 Some lords in Scotland waxed wonderous wroth,
And quarrelld with him for the nonce;
I shall you tell how itt beffell,
Twelue daggers were in him all att once.

7 When this queene see the chamberlaine was slaine,
For him her cheeks shee did weete,
And made a vow for a twelue month and a day
The king and shee weld not come in one sheete.

8 Then some of the lords of Scotland waxed wrothe,
And made their vow vehementlye,
'For death of the queenes chamberlains
The king himselfe he shall dye.

9 'They strowed his chamber oner with gunpowder,
And layd greene rushes in his way;

for the traitors thought that night
The worthy king for to betray.

10 To bedd the worthy king made him bowne,
To take his rest, that was his desire;
He wits noe sooner cast on sleepe,
But his chamber was on a blasing fyer.

11 Vp he lope, and a glasse window broke,
He had thirty foote for to fall;
Lord Bodwell kept a priuy wach
Vnderneath his castle-wall:
'Who haue wee heere ?' says Lord Bodwell
'Answer me. now I doe call.'

12 'King Henery the Eighth my vnckle was;
Some pittie show for his sweet sake!
Ah, Lord Bodwell, I know thee well;
Some pittie on me I pray thee take !'

13 'I 'le pittie thee as much,' he sayd,
'And as much favor I'le show to thee
As thou had on the queene's chamberlaine
That day thou deemedst him to dye.'

14 Through halls and towers this king they led
Through castles and towers that were hye
Through an arbor into an orchard,
And there hanged him in a peare tree.

15 When the gouernor of Scotland he heard tell
That the worthy king he was slaine,
He hath banished the queene soe bitterlye
That in Scotland shee dare not remaine.

16 But shee is fled into merry England,
And Scotland to a side hath lains,
And through the Queene of Englands ge grace
Now in England shee doth remaine.

From Percey manuscript 1765, in Child
David Riccio, Mary, Queen of Scots', chamberlain and minstrel was killed March
9, 1566.

Mary married Darnley, who was killed in February 1567.
Mary did not flee Scotland at that point, but rather after she had taken
Bothwell as her lover.

When she fled to England, Queen Elizabeth imprisoned her for many years until
she had Mary killed for plotting to overthrow Elizabeth. [SF]

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