

When Knighthood Was In Flower

On the Love Story of Charles Brandon and Mary, the King's Sister, and Her Marriage to the Duke of Longueville, King Henry the Fourth.

By Edwin Casakoden (Charles Major)

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Henry really liked or, rather, admired Brandon, as had often been shown, but his nature was incapable of real affection. The highest point he ever reached was admiration, often quite extravagant for a time, but usually short lived, as naked admiration is apt to be.

"Oh, no; nothing of that sort. I never ate or drank anything which he could possibly have touched. And as to signs and passes, I know he never made any. Sir Edwin, you were always present when I was with him until after we left for Bristol. Did you ever see anything of the sort?"

I answered "No," and she went on: "Besides, I do not believe much in signs and passes. No one can affect others unless he can induce them to eat or drink something in which he has placed a love powder or potion. Then, again, Master Brandon did not want me to love him, and surely would not have used such a method to gain what he could have had freely without it."

I noticed that Henry's mind had wandered from what Mary was saying and that his eyes were fixed upon me with a thoughtful, half vicious, inquiring stare that I did not like. I wondered what was coming next, but my curiosity was more than satisfied when the king asked, "So Casakoden was present at all your interviews?"

"Ah! Holy Mother! I knew what was coming now and actually began to shiver with fright. The king continued, "I suppose he helped you to escape?"

I thought my day had come, but Mary's wit was equal to the occasion. With an expression on her face of the most dove-like innocence she quickly said: "Oh, no! Neither he nor Jane knew anything of it. We were afraid they might divulge it."

"Shade of Sapphira! A lie is a pretty good thing, too, now and then, and the man who says that word of Mary's was not a blessed lie. Most fight me with lance, battle-axe, sword and dagger till one or the other of us bites the dust in death, be he great or small."

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