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WHEN KNIGHTHOOD WAS IN FLOWER

Or, The Love Story of Charles Brandon and Mary Tudor, the King's Sister, and Happening In the Reign of His August Majesty King Henry the Eighth

Rewritten and Rendered Into Modern English From Sir Edwin

Caskeden's Memoir EDWIN CASKODEN [CHARLES MAJOR]

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and would have preferred to remain merely girl and let events take the course they were going, for she liked it. But there was the other part of her which was princess, and which kept saying, "Remember who you are," so she was plainly at a loss between natural and artificial inclinations contending unconsciously within her.

Replying to Mary's remark over Jane's shoulder, Brandon said:

"Your highness asked us to lay aside ceremony for the evening, and if I have offended I can but make for my excuse so seriously that his meaning could not whether he pleased so capricious a person or not.

Mary made no reply, and it looked as if Brandon had the worst of it.

wearing an air of dignity. Cards were she gradually unbent again and bethe evening. Brandon, however, was frozen. He was polite, dignified and deferential to the ladies, but the spirit of the evening was gone since he had furnished it all with his free, offhand manner, full of life and brightness.

mood failing to thaw our frozen funmaker, and in her heart infinitely preferring pleasure to dignity, she said: "Oh, this is wearisome! Your game is far less entertaining than your new dance. Do something to make me laugh, Master Brandon."

"I fear you must call in Will Sommers," he replied, "if you wish to laugh. I cannot please you in both ways, so will hold to the one which seems to suit the princess."

Mary's eyes flashed, and she said ronically:

"That sounds very much as though you cared to please me in any way." Her lips parted, and she evidently had something unkind ready to say, but she held the breath she had taken to speak it with and after one or two false starts in as many different lines continued: "But perhaps I deserve it. I ask you to forgive me, and hereafter desire you three, upon all proper occasions, when we are by ourselves, to treat me as one of you - as a woman, a girl, I mean. Where is the virtue of royalty if it only means being put upon a pinnacle above all the real pleasures of life, like foolish old Stylites on his column? The queen is always preaching to me about the strict maintenance of my 'dignity royal,' as she calls it, and perhaps she is right. But out upon 'dignity royal,' say I! It is a terrible nuisance. Oh, A you don't know how difficult it is to be superb assortment at prices a princess and not a fool. There!" And

> Then, turning to Brandon: "You have taught me another good lesson, sir, and from this hour you are my friend, if you will be, so long as you are worthy-no, I do not mean that; I know you will always be worthy-but forever. Now we are at rights again. Let us try to remain so-that is, I will," and she laughingly gave him her hand, which he, rising to his feet, bowed low over and kissed, rather fervently and lingeringly, I thought.

Hand kissing was new to us in England, excepting in case of the king and queen at public homage. It was a little startling to Mary, though she permitted him to hold her hand much longer than there was any sort of need -a fact she recognized, as I could easily see from her telltale cheeks. which were rosy with the thought of

So it is when a woman goes on the defensive prematurely and without cause. It makes it harder to apply the

check when the real need comes. After a little card playing I expressed regret to Jane that I could not have a dance with her for lack of music.

"I will play, if the ladies permit," said Brandon, and he took Lady Jane's lute and played and sang some very pretty little love songs and some comic ones, too, in a style not often heard in England, so far away from the home of the troubadour and lute. He was full of surprises, this splendid fellow, with his accomplishments and graces.

When we had danced as long as we wished-that is, as Jane wished; as for myself, I would have been dancing yet -Mary again asked us to be seated. Jane having rested, Brandon offered to teach her the new dance, saying he could whistle an air well enough to give her the step. I at once grew uneasy with jealous suspense, for I did not wish Brandon to dance in that fashion with Jane, but to my great

relief she replied: "No, thank you; not tonight." Then, shyly glancing toward me: "Perhaps sall at right prices. Call and see us. Sir Edwin will teach me when he learns. It is his business, you know."

Would I? If a month, night and day, would conquer it, the new dance was as good as done for already. That was

We now had some songs from Mary and Jane; then I gave one, and Brandon sang again at Mary's request. We had duets and quartets and solos, and the songs were all sweet, for they came from the heart of youth and went to the soul of youth, rich in its God given fresh delight in everything. Then we

She was far more girl than princess, talked, and Mary and Jane, too, with a sly, shy, soft little word now and then, drew Brandon out to tell of his travels and adventures. He was a pleasing talker and had a smooth, easy flow of words, speaking always in a low, clear voice and with perfect composure. He had a way of looking first one auditor and then another straight in the eyes with a magnetic effect that gave to everything he said an added interest.

Although at that time less than twentyfive years old, he was really a learned man, having studied at Barcelona, Salamanca and Paris. While there had my desire to please you. Be sure I been no system in his education, his shall offend no more." This was said | mind was a sort of knowledge junkshop wherein he could find almost anything be misunderstood. He did not care he wanted. He spoke German, French and Spanish and seemed to know the literature of all these languages.

He told us he had left home at the early age of sixteen as his uncle's es-We sat a few minutes talking, Mary | quire and had fought in France, then down in Holland with the Dutch, had proposed, and as the game progressed been captured by the Spanish and had joined the Spanish army, as it mattered came affable and familiar as earlier in | not where he fought so that there was chance for honorable achievement and a fair ransom now and then. He told us how he had gone to Barcelona and Salamanca, where he had studied, and thence to Granada, among the Moors: of his fighting against the pi-After a short time, Mary's warming | rates of Barbary, his capture by them, his slavery and adventurous escape and his regret that now drowsy peace kept him mewed up in a palace.

"It is true," he said, "there is a prospect of trouble with Scotland, but I



"Sir, torgive me."

would rather fight a pack of howling, starving wolves than the Scotch. They fight like very devils, which, of course, is well, but you have nothing after you have beaten them, not even a good whole wolfskin."

In an unfortunate moment Mary said, "Oh, Master Brandon, tell us of your duel with Judson."

Thoughtful, considerate Jane frown ed at the princess in surprise and put her finger on her lips.

"Your ladyship, I fear I cannot," he answered, and left his seat, going over to the window, where he stood, with his back toward us, looking out into the darkness. Mary saw what she had done, and her eyes grew moist, for, with all her faults, she had a warm, tender heart and a quick, responsive sympathy. After a few seconds of painful silence she went softly over to

the window where Brandon stood. "Sir, forgive me," she said, putting her hand prettily upon his a m. "T should have known. Believe me, I

would not have hurt you intentionally." "Ah, my lady, the word was thoughtlessly spoken and needs no forgiveness. But your heart shows itself in the asking, and I thank you. I wanted but a moment to throw off the thought of that terrible day." Then they came back together, and the princess, who had tact enough when she cared to use it, soon put matters right again.

I started to tell one of my best stories in order to cheer Brandon, but in the midst of it Mary, who, I had noticed, was restless and uneasy, full of blushes and hesitancy and with a manner as new to her as the dawn of the first day was to the awakening world, abruptly asked Brandon to dance with her again. She had risen and was standing by her chair, ready to be led

"Gladly," answered Brandon as he sprang to her side and took her hand. "Which shall it be-La Galliard or the new dance?" And Mary, standing there, the picture of waiting, willing modesty, lifted her free hand to his shoulder, tried to raise her eyes to his, but failed and softly said, "The new dance."

This time the dancing was more soshe had felt the tingling of a new, strange force in Brandon's touch. A man, not a worm, but a real man, with all the irresistible, infinite attractions the subtle drawing of the lodestone for the passive iron-had come into her life. Doubly sweet it was to her intense young virgin soul in that it first revealed the dawning of that two edged

existence to love.

bliss which makes a heaven or a hell

of earth-of earth, which owes its very

but that she had met and for the nrst time felt the touch, yes, even the subtle, unconscious, dominating force so sweet to woman, of the man she could love, and had known the rarest throb that pulses in that choicest of all God's perfect handiwork-a woman's heartthe throb that goes before, the John

the Baptist, as it were, of coming love. It being after midnight, Mary filled two cups of wine, from each of which she took a sip, and handed them to Brandon and me. She then paid me the 10 crowns, very soberly thanked us and said we were at liberty to go.

The only words Brandon ever spoke we retired:

Gol I am not in love with her. I would fall upon my sword if I were."

she had never treated any other man kissed Mary's bare shoulder, and Mary as she had treated him, but I thought | kissed the top of Jane's head, and they best to leave it unsaid. Trouble was apt to come of its own accord soon enough.

when the princess asked me to bring Brandon to her that she might have a little sport at his expense she looked for a laugh, but found a sigh.

> CHAPTER V. AN HONOR AND AN ENEMY.

DAY or two after this Brandon was commanded to an audience and presented to the king and queen. He was now

eligible to all palace entertainments and would probably have many invitations, being a favorite with both their majesties. As to his standing with Mary, who was really the most important figure socially about the court, I could not exactly say. She was such a mixture of contradictory impulses and rapid transitions, and was so full of whims and caprice, the inevitable outgrowth of her blood, her rank and the adulation amid which she had always lived, that I could not predict for a day ahead her attitude toward any one. She had never shown so great favor to any man as to Brandon, but just how much of her condescension was a mere whim, growing out of the impulse of the moment and subject to reaction, I could not tell. I believed, however, that Brandon stood upon a firmer foundation with this changing, shifting quicksand of a girl than with either of their majesties.

In fact, I thought he rested upon her heart itself. But to guess correctly what a girl of that sort will do or think or feel would require inspiration.

given by the king and queen included as guests nearly all the court, but Mary often had little fetes and dancing parties which were smaller, more select and informal. These parties were really with the consent and encouragement of the king, to avoid the responsibility of not inviting everybody. The larger affairs were very dull, and what was going on, it came so quickly smaller ones might give offense to those who were left out. The latter, Brandon's sword was out of its sheath therefore, were turned over to Mary, and Buckingham's blade was flying towho cared very little who was offended or who was not, and invitations to was sheathed again so quickly that one them were highly valued.

Brandon's presentation a message arrived from Mary notifying me that she would have a little fete that evening in one of the smaller halls and direct- against the hard floor, saying. "I will ing me to be there as master of the dull the point lest my lord, being unacdance. Accompanying the message was | customed to its use, wound himself." a note from no less a person than the This brought peals of laughter from princess herself, inviting Brandon.

This was an honor indeed—an autograph invitation from the hand of Mary! But the masterful rascal did not seem to consider it anything unusual, and when I handed him the note upon his return from the hunt he simply read it carelessly over once, tore it in pieces and tossed it away. I believe the Duke of Buckingham would have given 10,000 crowns to receive such a note and would doubtless have shown it to half the court in triumphant confidence before the middle of the night. To this great captain of the guard it was but a scrap of paper. He was glad

we it, nevertheless, and with all his restraint and stoicism could not conceal his pleasure.

Brandon at once accepted the invitation in a personal note to the princess. The boldness of this actually took my startled Mary a little also. As you | walk about the room. Mary ain al royal" was subject to alarms and quite | said laughingly: her most troublesome attribute-very apt to receive damage in her relations with Brandon.

despite the fact that her sense of dignity had been disturbed by it, but after she had read it slipped off into her private room, read it again and put it on reread it and, after a little hesitation, put it in her pocket. It remained in the pocket for a moment or two, when out it came for another perusal, and then she unfastened her bodice and put it in her bosom. Mary had been so inhad not seen Jane, who was sitting turned and saw her she was so angry she snatched the note from her bosom and threw it upon the floor, stamping her foot in embarrassment and rage. "How dare you watch me, bussy?"

she cried. "You lurk around as still as you spying on me."

"I did not spy upon you, Lady Mary," said Jane quietly. "Don't answer me! I know you did!

I want you to be less silent after this. Do you hear? Cough or sing or stumble; do something, anything, that I may hear you."

Jane rose, picked up the note and offered it to her mistress, who snatched | bidders, and soon, I noticed, she espied it with one hand while she gave her a sharp slap with the other. Jane ran out, and Mary, full of anger and shame, I do not mean that Mary was in love, slammed the door and locked it. The

note, being the cause of all the trouble, she impatiently threw to the floor again and went over to the window bench, where she threw herself down to pout. In the course of five minutes she turned her head for one fleeting instant and looked at the note, and then, after a little hesitation, stole over to where she had thrown it and picked it up. Going back to the light at the window she held it in her hand a moment and then read it once, twice, thrice. The third time brought the smile, and the note nestled in the

bosom again. Jane did not come off so well, for her concerning that evening were just as miscress did not speak to her until she called her in that evening to make her "Jesu, she is perfect! But you were toilet. By that time Mary had forgotwrong, Caskoden. I can still thank ten about the note in her bosom; so when Jane began to array her for the dance it fell to the floor, whereupon I was upon the point of telling him | both girls broke into a laugh, and Jane were friends again.

So Brandon accepted Mary's invitation and went to Mary's dance, but his In truth, I may as well tell you that going made for him an enemy of the most powerful nobleman in the realm, and this was the way of it:

These parties of Mary's had been going on once or twice a week during the entire winter and spring, and usually included the same persons. It was a sort of coterie, whose members were more or less congenial and most of them very jealous of interlopers. Strange as it may seem, uninvited persons often attempted to force themselves in, and all sorts of schemes and maneuvers were adopted to gain admission. To prevent this two guardsmen with halberds were stationed at the door. Modesty. I might say, neither thrives

por is useful at court. When Brandon presented himself at the door, his entrance was barred, but he quickly pushed aside the halberds and entered. The Duke of Buckingham, a proud, self important individual, was standing near the door and saw it all. Now, Buckingham was one of those unfortunate persons who never lose an opportunity to make a mistake, and, being anxious to display his zeal on behalf of the princess, stepped up to prevent Brandon's entrance.

"Sir, you will have to move out of this," he said pompously. "You are not at a jousting bout. You have made a mistake and have come to the wrong

"My lord of Buckingham is pleased to make rather more of an ass of him self than usual this evening." replied Brandon, with a smile, as he started across the room to Mary, whose eye he had caught. She had seen and heard Of course most of the entertainments | it all, but instead of coming to his relief stood there laughing to herself. At this Buckingham grew furious and ran around ahead of Brandon, valiantly drawing his sword.

"Now, by heaven, fellow, make but an other step, and I will run you through!" he said.

I saw it all, but could hardly realize and was over so soon. Like a flash ward the ceiling. Brandon's sword could hardly believe it had been out One afternoon a day or two after at all, and, picking up Buckingham's. he said with a half smothered laugh, "My lord has dropped his sword. He then broke its point with his heel everybody, including the king. Mary laughed also, bat, as Brandon was handing Buckingham his blade, came

up and demanded: "My lord, is this the way you take it upon yourself to receive my guests? Who appointed you, let me ask, to guard my door? We shall have to omis your name from our next list unless you take a few lessons in good man This was striking him hard. at the quality of the man will at one plain to you when I say tha often received worse treatment to the girl's skirts all the

more tenaciously. Turning to Transon. the princess said:

"Master Brandon, I am glad to see you, and regret exceedingly that our friend of Buckingham should so thirst for your blood." She then be him to the king and queen, to whom to made breath, and it seems at first to have his bow, and the pair continued their must know by this time, her "dignity | huded to the skirmsh at the cor and

"I would have come to your help, but I knew you were amply able to take care of yourself. I was sure you would Mary did not destroy Brandon's note, worst the duke in some way. It was better than a mummery, and I was glad to see it. I do not like him."

The king did not open these private balls, as he was supposed at least not her escritoire. Soon she picked it up. to be their patron, and the queen, who was considerably older than Henry, was averse to such things. So the princess opened her own balls, dancing for a few minutes, with the floor entirely to herself and partner. It was the honor of the evening to open the ball with tent upon what she was doing that she her, and quite curious to see how men put themselves in her way and stood quietly in the window, and when she so as to be easily observed and, perchance, chosen. Brandon after leaving Mary had drifted into a corner of the room back of a group of people and was talking to Wolsey-who was always very friendly to him-and to Master Cavendish, a quaint, quiet, easy litberly done, and when Mary stopped it | the grave, and I have to look into every | tle man, full of learning and kindness, was with serious, thoughtful eyes, for nook and corner wherever I go or have and a warm friend to the Princess

Mary. It was time to open the ball, and from my place in the musicians' gallery I could see Mary moving about among the guests, evidently looking for a partner, while the men resorted to some very transparent and amusing expedients to attract her attention. The princess, however, took none of the Brandon standing in the corner with

his back toward her. Something told me she was going to ask him to open the dance, and I re-

gretted it, because I knew it would set every nobleman in the house against him, they being very jealous of the "lowborn favorites," as they called the untitled friends of royalty. Sure enough, I was right. Mary at once began to make her way over to the corner, and I heard her say, "Master Bran-

don, will you dance with me?" It was done prettily. The whole girl changed as soon as she found herself in front of him. In place of the old time confidence, strongly tinged with arrogance, she was almost shy, and blushed and stammered with quick coming breath, like a burgher maid before her new found gallant. At once the courtlers made way for her, and out she walked, leading Brandon by the hand. Upon her lips and in her eyes was a rare, triumphant smile, as if to say:

"Look at this handsome new trophy of my bow and spear."

I was surprised and alarmed when Mary chose Brandon, but when I turned to the musicians to direct their play imagine, if you can, my surprise when the leader said:

"Master, we have our orders for the first dance from the princess."

Imagine also, if you can, my double surprise and alarm - nay, almost my terror-when the band struck up Jane's "Sailor Lass." I saw the look of surprise and inquiry which Brandon gave Mary, standing there demurely by his side, when he first heard the music, and I heard her nervous little laugh as she nodded her head, "Yes," and stepped closer to him to take position for the dance. The next moment she was in Brandon's arms, flying like a sylph about the room. A buzz of astonishment and delight greeted them before they were half way around and then a great clapping of hands, in which the king himself joined. It was a lovely sight, although I think a graceful woman is more beautiful in La Galliard than any other dance or, in fact, any other situation in which she can place herself.

After a little time the dowager Duchess of Kent, first lady in waiting to the queen, presented herself at the musicians' gallery and said that her majesty had ordered the music stopped, and the musicians, of course, ceased playing at once. Mary thereupon turned quickly to me.

"Master, are our musicians weary that they stop before we are through?" The queen answered for me in a high voiced Spanish accent; "I ordered the music stopped. I will not permit such an indecent exhibition to go on longer."

Fire sprang to Mary's eyes and she exclaimed: "If your majesty does not like the way we do and dance at my balls, you can retire as soon as you see fit. Your face is a kill-mirth anyway." It never took long to rouse her ladyship.

The queen turned to Henry, who was laughing, and angrily demanded:

"Will your majesty permit me to be thus insulted in your very presence?"

"You got yourself into it. Get out of it as best you can. I have often told you to let her alone. She has sharp claws." The king was really tired of Catherine's sour frown before he married her. It was her dower of Spanish gold that brought her a second Tudor husband.

"Shall I not have what music and dances I want at my own balls?" asked

the princess. "That you shall, sister mine; that you shall," answered the king. "Go on, master, and if the girl likes to dance that way, in God's name let her have her wish. It will never hurt her. We will learn it ourself, and will wear the ladies out a-dancing."

After Mary had finished the opening dance there was a great demand for instruction. The king asked Brandon to teach him the steps, which he soon learned to perform with a grace perhaps equaled by no living creature other than a fat brown bear. The ladies were at first a little shy and inclined to stand at arm's length, but Mary had set the fashion and the others soon followed. I had taken a fiddler to my Footh and had learned the dance from Brandon and was able to teach it also, though I lacked practice to make my step perfect. The princess had needed no practice, but had danced beautifully from the first, her strong young limbs and supple body taking as naturally to anything requiring grace of movement as a cygnet to water.

This, thought I, is my opportunity to teach Jane the new dance. I wanted to go to her first, but was afraid, or for some reason did not, and took several other ladies as they came. After I had shown the step to them I sought out my sweetheart. Jane was not a prude, but I honestly believe she was the most provoking girl that ever lived. I never had succeeded in holding her hand even the smallest part of an instant, and yet I was sure she liked me very much-almost sure she loved me. She feared I might unhinge it and carry it away, or something of that sort, I suppose. When I went up and asked her to let me teach her the new dance, she said:

"I thank you, Edwin, but there are others who are more anxious to learn than I, and you had better teach them

"But I want to teach you. When I wish to teach them, I will go to them." "You did go to several others before you thought of coming to me," answered Jane, pretending to be piqued. Now, that was the unkindest thing I ever knew a girl to do-refuse me what she knew I so wanted and then put the refusal on the pretended ground that I did not care much about it. I so told her, and she saw she had carried things too far and that I was growing angry in earnest. She then made another false though somewhat flattering ex-

"I could not bear to go through that dance before so large a company. I should not object so much if no one else tould see-that is, with you, Edwin." "Edwin!" Oh, so soft and sweet! The little jade! To think that she could