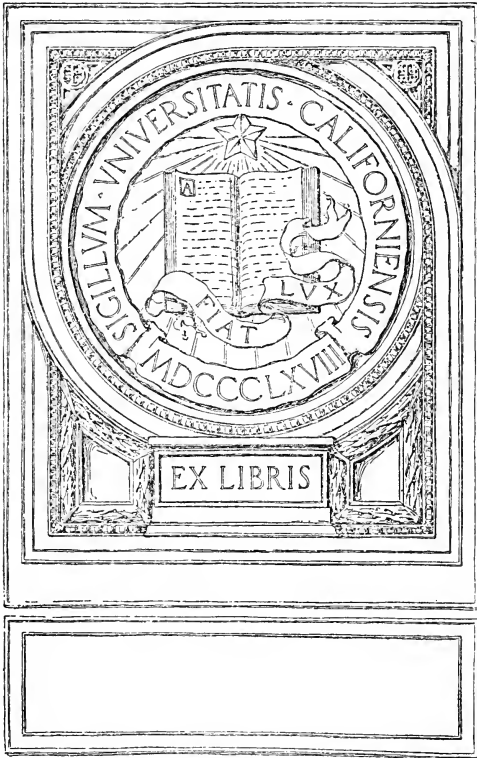




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DAVID RICCIO  
OR  
RIZZIO







DAVID RIZZIO  
(From Lord Ruthven's "Relation")



SEIGNEUR DAVIE  
A SKETCH LIFE OF  
DAVID RICCIO

(RIZZIO)

BY  
A. FRANCIS STEUART  
ADVOCATE

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## P R E F A C E

IN producing this little study of "Seigneur Davie" I shall probably be censured for printing an unnecessary book as there is so little in it (although there *is* a little) that has not been published before. But perhaps the illustrations may atone, as one is rare and the others are new to the world. The first of the hero of the book I owe to *Lord Ruthven's Relation*. The second (formerly belonging to the Dukes of Argyll) is in the possession of Lord Seaforth. The "Memorial Portrait," if we may so term it, of Queen Mary and her Singer, belongs to Sir Archibald Buchan Hepburn of Smeaton, Bart. "Rizzio's Oak" is shown on the delightful bookplate of

## Preface

Violet, Viscountess Melville. For the kind permission to use these works of art, I desire to give the owners my sincere thanks.

A. FRANCIS STEUART.

UNIVERSITY CLUB,  
EDINBURGH.

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## FOREWORD

THE life of Mary Queen of Scots has been written and rewritten, and will continue to be so, as her career was one of the most extraordinary the world has ever seen; her life a continual struggle and her death a tragedy. She is alternately regarded as a monster of iniquity, a martyr for Religion, a sinner or a saint. In this little book it is not intended to discuss these points of view. What is desired is to show in narrative form how the Queen's lonely position forced her to trust to an Italian in her service, aroused the jealousy of her Court, and how the murder of this Italian in her presence by the malice of her own

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husband was the chief cause of all the troubles that befell the unhappy Queen and of her ultimate downfall. Other tragedies are associated with the Stuarts and Bourbons, but surely none with a worse cause than that a King consort should deliberately put to death in his wife's presence the favourite who had through his influence placed the crown upon his unworthy head.

Mary Queen of Scots is from her many-sided career a link among nations. If one is a Scot, she was born a Queen of Scots. If English, she was next heir to the throne of England or (in Catholic eyes) rightful Queen. If French, she was the widowed Queen of France, and as she declared at her execution a true Scotswoman and a true Frenchwoman. If one is Spanish, did she not carry on diplomatic relations with the most Catholic



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King and even bequeathed him her rights (which had grown shadowy) to the throne of England? If one is a Catholic, one may regard her as a martyr to her Faith; whereas to the Swedes and Danes she was a possible bride of their Reforming Kings. In fact, she belongs not to one nation but to the whole history of Western Europe of her time.

The culture of Mary was French, but the French Court at her time was curiously Italian. Her husband's mother was Catherine de Medici, who was surrounded by her Italian compatriots. It is necessary to show this when we consider why the Queen had so many Italians in her employ and why she gave especial trust to them. It was a feature of the age, and though in France and Scotland it had distressing results, it was probably originally as innocent as the fondness

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of the Georgian Kings and Queen Victoria for surrounding themselves with German confidants—confidants of not exalted origin but who, once placed in the Court, remained in it and exercised considerable though secret influence especially in foreign diplomatic relations.

As far as the writer is aware, only one brochure on David Riccio has ever been attempted; and although he cannot claim to have much that is new in this monograph, it cannot be wrong to put together all that is known about David Riccio, the Italian favourite of Queen Mary, the favourite on whose murder she exclaimed, “Ah, poor David, my good and faithful servant! May the Lord have mercy on your soul”—not foreseeing that this murder would involve her in every kind of misery and trouble, and would eventually be the cause of

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her flight from her kingdom to England, where an arbitrary imprisonment for eighteen years and a felon's death nobly borne awaited her.



# SEIGNEUR DAVIE

A SKETCH LIFE OF DAVID RICCIO

## CHAPTER I

IN the sixteenth century (and as late as the eighteenth) Italians were the political adventurers of Europe. They had preserved the Roman culture and education, stimulated by the Renaissance, but they, outside the Holy See, had little scope in their own divided land. Italy remained the country of Religion, of Music, of Poetry and, on account of its million factions and wars and miserable poverty, of intrigue. Italy was a welter of states: the Papacy, Naples under Spain, Mantua, Ferrara, Parma, Urbino and many others. The

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republics of Genoa and Venice spread Italian culture in Dalmatia and the East, while Savoy—the oldest dynasty, it is alleged, in Europe—was always between France and Italy in sentiment. Under Louis XII. France had claimed (and won) the Milanese, but when his successor François I. was taken prisoner by the Emperor Charles V. at Pavia, not only were all his Italian possessions forfeited, but Italy was at the Emperor's feet. This drove a lot of the best Italians into the French service (where the Dauphine, Catherine de Medici, welcomed her countrymen) in shoals. They felt France was less inimical to their native land than the German ruler. Thus we see that Leone Strozzi and Pietro his brother, both distinguished Florentines, were in the French navy and army. Both assisted the French in Scotland, where Leone

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(sailing round from Marseilles was the first European to take a fleet of swift galleys through the Strait of Gibraltar), by command of King Henri II. of France, captured the castle of St Andrews, which held out after the murder of Cardinal Bethune, and made prisoners the Protestants therein. Among those were the reformer John Knox and, as we shall see, Mr James Balfour, who paid for their "treason" by imprisonment in the French galleys. Pietro Strozzi was also connected with Scottish history, for he was wounded while supporting the Queen Regent at Haddington in 1548, and he assisted her in the fortification of Leith. The French Court of Queen Catherine was filled with Italians, some good, some bad. There were the Abbé Rucellai, the Queen's astrologer; René Bianchi, the Queen's perfumer, others

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said poisoner. René de Birago was a Milanese soldier who became Chancellor of France and a Cardinal, and it was said advised Charles IX. to get rid of the Huguenots not by soldiers but by cooks ; and when in spite of this cynical advice the massacre of St Bartholomew was decided on in 1572, the Council for *les noces vermeilles* included Birago, the Italians Gondi and Gonzaga ; while Cariana, Petrucci and Bianchi were active. It is necessary to remember this fear of the Italian as an assassin when we come to study the hatred of the Scots nobles to David Riccio, who had fallen a victim to it some years before the St Bartholomew took place.

The Italian was great as a banker and as a political intriguer. Mary Stuart owed her death eventually and the Duke of Norfolk immediately to the



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failure of the plot between the Florentine Roberto Ridolfi and Philip of Spain. But nothing discouraged the Italian adventurer. Not dismayed by the fall of Riccio, we see next century two Italians, Concino Concini and his wife Leonora Dori, called "La Galegai," in the highest favour in France with the Queen, Marie de Medicis. They became all-powerful: Concini in rapid succession from a poor man (like Riccio he was alleged by his rivals to be of the lowest birth, which seems to have been untrue) to the richest man in his adopted country and Marshal of France. Suddenly, as in Riccio's case, the nobles rose, a plot was hatched for his downfall. Concini was killed 24th April 1617 in the Louvre, dragged through Paris, hanged by the heels from the Pont Neuf, and finally burned at the Place de Grève. Four months

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later his wife was burned alive for sorcery, the Queen being unable to protect her, while their son, the Comte de Pena, stripped of all his French possessions, was imprisoned for many years.

It was when the great Italian adventurer, who did well by France, which so enriched him after a wonderful career, Cardinal Giulio Mazarin, was at the height of his power that the next tragedy in France in which an Italian adventurer was a victim again occurred.

In 1657 the eccentric Queen Christina of Sweden, who had renounced her crown, made herself a Catholic and a resident at Rome, visited France with her Italianate Court, and of this the chief figures were the Marquis Monaldeschi, "grand écuyer, favori de la veille," and the Conte Sentinelli, "Capitaine des Gardes, favori du jour," and came to Fontaine-

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bleau. On 10th November all France was horrified to hear that the Swedish Queen had had the Marchese Monaldeschi, shriven at the point of the dagger by the trembling Père Le Bel, put to death on the charge of treason and forgery after a struggle lasting two long hours. At once Mazarin sent a messenger to the ex-Queen to forbid her to come to Paris for fear of the vengeance of the people. He received an incoherently angry letter back containing the arrogant words : " Pour l'action que j'ai fait avec Monaldeschi, je vous dis que, si je ne l'avais faite, que je ne me coucherais pas ce soir sans le faire ; et je n'ai nulle raison de m'en repentir." This bloody deed made the scene at Fontainebleau as unforgettable as the murder at Holyrood, and it went against Queen Christina in every political scheme that she at-

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tempted afterwards, never having passed out of mind.

As half of Europe became Protestant the scope for Italian adventurers was gradually narrowed. Still, a volume could be written about their doings in Russia and Poland. Germany did by no means disdain them, and even Frederick the Great had one in his diplomacy, Lucchesini of Lucca, as his envoy and agent in Poland. Louis XIV. employed the soi-disant astrologer, M. l'Abbé Prignani, to win over Charles II. in England, but that astute King wrote to his sister: "Madame" on 7th March 1669, unsympathetically: "I will keep the secret of your prophet. I give little credit to such kinde of cattle, and the lesse you do it the better, for if they could tell anything, it is inconvenient to know one's fortune beforehand, whether

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good or bad, and so, my dearest Sister, good night." The horse-loving King took the Abbé to the races at Newmarket, however, where he was foolish enough to give racing tips from astrology which were not successful, and then the King wrote in glee: "Upon confidence that the starrs could tell which horse would win, for he had the ill-luck to fortel three times wrong together, and James [the Duke of Monmouth] believed him so much as he lost his money upon the same score." So the Abbé Prignani returned discredited to France.

But, while mentioning all these less fortunate Italians, one must refer again to the careers of the two Italian cardinals who owe thanks from their adopted countries. One was Giulio Mazarin, who died in France full of power as the great Cardinal. The other was Cardinal Giulio

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Alberoni (1664-1752), who, though he failed in Spain and was disgraced, after being all-powerful, in 1719, yet deserves thanks both from Spain, where he played a great part, and from Italy, for he was the first politician who in modern times saw the possibility of a unification of Italy under a quasi-Italian prince, a political dream that was accomplished more than a century after his death through the medium of the house of Savoy.

## CHAPTER II

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS, sent to France to be educated in safety when a little girl of six years old, married there to the Dauphin in 1558, and in December the widowed Queen of France by the death of her husband François II. in 1560 was in a desperate plight, though she did not know it, when she was forced to return to Scotland.

She was beautiful, accomplished and young—eighteen years old. Her mother, the Regent Marie of Lorraine-Guise, had died in 1560, after a plucky fight with rebellious nobles. Scotland during her regency had been torn with factions. The Regent was a Catholic, and made

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the fatal attempt to rule Scotland by Frenchmen (of whom M. Rubie, who "had the Seals," was one), hated as foreigners and more hated as of the old Religion, as the Scottish nobles were now mostly of the Reformed faith. She had left this religious difficulty as a *damnosa hereditas* to her unlucky daughter. The nobles, accustomed to rebellion, had no wish for the personal rule of a resident Queen, and before her arrival in her own kingdom there was a strong party against her, nominally because of her faith, the "Idol of the Mass," but more really on account of her presence. It was not without reason that Pope Pius IV. on her widowhood sent her the golden rose, and compared her position to that of a "rose among thorns."

Her nobility who were strongest were



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Protestants. Only two Catholics were notable, the Earl of Atholl, who was mild and moderate, and Huntly, soon to be laid low. The next heir to the crown, the Duke of Chatelherault, was vacillatory in religion and in reason. The man who had most power, owing to his adoption of the Reformed tenets, was the Queen's bastard brother James Stuart, Earl of Moray, a man of great repute among the preachers, moral and cautious but full of the lust for power. With him went Lord Lindsay of the Byres, who was married to his half-sister (and it is remarkable in this age to see that illegitimacy was no bar to the tie of kindred), and the great Highland chief the Earl of Argyll, who had married a bastard royal Stuart. The other great noble most hostile to the Queen's cause was James Douglas, Earl

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of Morton. He had by marriage to an insane heiress become possessed of the Earldom of Morton, and carried on a dissolute life in his castle of Dalkeith, near Edinburgh. His family and faction were Anglophil, and he himself had been an exile in England, and once he disclosed his latent religion to be Protestant was like the other reformers on the English side. A noble powerful more from his rugged nature than for his lands was Lord Ruthven. His was a strange character, a rigid reformer, not unsuspected (as were his descendants) of dabbling in the black art. Already he had been one of the opponents of the Queen Regent. He was accused of black art and of giving Queen Mary a ring to guard her against poison. His son was also regarded as a necromancer, while his grandson, the Lord Gowrie of the

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Conspiracy, was believed to have studied alchemy and magic in Padua "beyond the Sea," and his brother Patrick was a physician. Now these five—Moray secretly and the other four more openly—were on the watch to seize the smallest opportunity to divert the power from the young Queen to their own hands. Their Queen, of foreign nurture, hostile religion, and with no certain following, had nothing to trust to among her own subjects except her beauty, youth and natural charm.

The Queen endured her period of mourning in France, the forty days, when clothed in white—*la deuil blanche*—she mourned in darkened rooms for her lost husband the King of France, and then was forced by circumstances to return to her own but little known kingdom. Queen Elizabeth refused her

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a safe conduct through England, and there is little doubt would have captured her if she could during the voyage. Nevertheless, the voyage was successfully accomplished, and the Queen and her "Maries" arrived at Leith on 19th August 1561.

They were hailed with a "dolorous face of the heaven," says Knox, who was horrified at the idea of the "Idol of the Mass" being set up in the Queen's chapel. Bonfires were burned, however, in her honour, and she was serenaded with psalms and spiritual songs by her subjects. On 2nd September, at her public entry into Edinburgh, her religion was openly sneered at. "The first sight that she saw after she came out of the castle was a boy of six years of age, that came as it were from heaven out of a round globe, that

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presented unto her a Bible and a Psalter and the Keys of the Gates. . . . Then, for the terrible significations of God upon idolatry, there were burnt Korah, Dathan and Abiram, in the time of their sacrifice. They were minded to have a priest burned at the altar at the Elevation. The Earl of Huntly stayed that pageant. . . . He bare that day the sword."

The Queen was tolerant. She acquiesced in the Reformers' rule, but retained her own faith. She allowed Knox to hector, being, as the English Ambassador wrote, "Patient to bear and beareth much," but her loneliness drove her into the society of her French courtiers and, alienated from all her Scottish subjects, it was from foreigners that she sought fidelity and counsel, and she thought she had found both

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in the Italian, David Riccio, who had arrived in Scotland and whom she regarded as having no interest to serve but the Queen's own.

### CHAPTER III

DAVID RICCIO, who is known in Scottish history indifferently as Riccio, Rizzio, Richio and Riccioli, with other variants, and generally called by the people "Seigneur Davie," is a fleeting figure who by his tragic death will never be forgotten. The facts of his early life are difficult to string together, but they seem to be these: He was born at Pancalieri in Piedmont about the year 1534 (Labanoff, vii. p. 86), though certain Scottish historians antedate his birth an inordinate degree — one, Bishop Leslie, by nearly twenty-two years. He was without doubt old - looking, and gave many of his contemporaries the idea,

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even in the heyday of his favour, that he was "old and discreet" (Caussin, *Holy Court*, 1678, p. 813). He was dark-skinned, a thing rare in Scotland and not admired there, being "in visage verie black." Lord Herries, who knew him, describes him as "neither handsome nor well-faced," but says nothing about the alleged deformity which Buchanan attributes to him, coupling it with the meanness of his birth. The English writers seem to have been most impressed with this deformity, but we shall see that the French envoy mentions it also. There is a curious statement, which probably indicates that he was a little *contrefait*,<sup>1</sup> as many people were in those

<sup>1</sup> Miss Strickland quotes Buchanan and *Le livre de la Morte de Marie Stuart*, which says that Riccio was "disgracié de corps," but which was not printed until 1587. She cites two more authorities for his alleged deformity, but one speaks of him as "old"



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unhygienic and unsurgical days, when a dislocation might become a permanent defect. It is this: Miss Strickland says that Queen Mary "made him groom of the chamber, and finally her own secretary, having been recommended by her uncle,<sup>1</sup> the Cardinal de Lorraine, to take him in that capacity, because his dwarfish and deformed person would disarm scandal." It may be so, but instead of disarming scandal it provoked it, and the "deformity" did not interfere with Riccio's activity or prevent him from playing tennis. Sir James Melville of Halhill, who knew him well and gave him

as well as deformed, and the other as "in years," both of which are quite contradicted by the dispatch to Cosimo I. of 8th October 1566, which says that when Riccio came to Scotland he was "28 annij in circa."

<sup>1</sup> This is unsubstantiated in Miss Strickland's notes, but may be true. Queen Mary certainly got her uncle M. d'Elbeuf to get leave to transfer Riccio to her service from M. de Moretta.

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good advice as to his carriage at Court, does not allude to his form, merely describing him as “ a merry fellow and a gud musicien ” (*Memoirs*, pp. 131-2), and tells us that he was “ of the contre of Piedmont.”

And so he was. He was the son of a member of the Italian *noblesse*, who though not in any way specially distinguished, yet, it is stated, belonged to the noble family of the Signori di S. Paolo e Cellarengo in Astigiana. Carlo Tenvelli (*Biographia Piemontese*, ii. 252; Turin, 1784), who states this, tells us also: “ Una famiglia Ricci è computata fra le antiche nobili Piemontesi, e gode de' feudi di S. Paolo e Cellarengo nell' Astigiana. Essisteva pur anche un altro ramo degli stessi, Ricci Signori di Solbrito, i soggetti del quale dicesi, che usassero sovente del nome di Davide e

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da questo è tradizione antica in Astigiana, che sia disceso Davide Ricci, ma in linea spuria. Gli oltramontani lo chiamano David Riz, e Rizio.”

But if David Riccio's father was a noble, as we are here led to believe, he was poor, and supported his family by playing the flute and teaching music in the town of Turin. Having, as Buchanan says, no patrimony to leave his family, he taught them all, both sons and daughters, music also. Of what number the family consisted we do not know, except that there were two sons, David, and Joseph, who may have been considerably younger than his brother, both of whom were linked together in Scottish history.

Pancalieri, David Riccio's native place, merits a word. It is a hill town, one of the many towns in Piedmont placed

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upon a steep hillside near Racconigi, the modern mountain resort. Originally appertaining to the Marquisate of Saluzzo, in 1410 it had come into the hands of Lodovico, Prince of Acaia, and he gave it to his natural son Lodovico. Passing to the Duke of Savoy after the death of Giovanni Francesco, nephew or grandson of the last, it was granted to the Signor of Racconigi. The township felt the terrors of war during the many Piedmontese conflicts. It was sacked in 1486 by the army of the Duke of Savoy in revenge for the opposition of its owner, Claudio di Racconigi.

It is stated that David Riccio began life by being sent to the Savoyard Court at Nice, the only part of his dukedom which remained under the sway of the Duke of Savoy. Duke Charles III., the

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Good (1486-1553), had lost all his other territories in the interminable wars. France had taken possession of his Savoyard dukedom, while the Empire seized and, after much fighting, garrisoned his fiefs in Piedmont. Savoy had for too long been a buffer state suffering from the rapine of both its more powerful neighbours. Most of its ducal alliances had been with France, though Charles III. had himself married Beatrice of Portugal. It was their son Duke Emmanuel Philibert who, as a reward of good generalship for the Empire, had the satisfaction of having almost the whole of his possessions (with the exception of Pinerolo, Saluzzo and Savigliano) restored to him by the Treaty of Cateau Cambresis in 1557. The Piedmontese part of his dominions made him reckoned an Italian ruler, but French

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was the language of his Court, and this was intensified by the Duke's marriage in 1559 to the beautiful and charming Marguerite de Valois, daughter of François I., King of France. In this Court Riccio doubtless learned the French that he used in his correspondence (at which Melville hints he was not too skilful), and the courtly tortuous diplomacy of the fifteenth century which raised him so high to plunge him to ruin. We know little else about his early days save that he was also (probably later) in the service of the Archbishop of Turin. Between 1520 and 1562 there were only two Archbishops of that See, both of the same Italian family, that of Cibò, which had given a Pope to the Holy See in Innocent VIII. The first of these was Innocent Cibò, who resigned the Archbishopric in 1549, dying next



DAVID RIZZIO  
(Lord Seaforth's Portrait)

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year, and was succeeded by Cæsar Usdimare Cibò, who was translated in 1562 to Mariana and Trient (P. B. Gams's *Series Episcoporum Ecclesiæ Catholicæ*, p. 824).

The family name of Riccio's patron is of some interest when so little is known of his early life, as we find his next protector, M. de Moretta, is called "cognato" (cousin, or of kin) to the Archbishop (Labanoff, vii. 65). It is alleged that when Riccio left the Court of Savoy that he was "reduced to great distress" (*Some Particulars*, i.), and that M. de Moretta hearing of this took him into his employ, as he was preparing to go to Scotland as Ambassador. It is quite likely also that, as his fief Moretta is a hill town in Piedmont not far from Pancalieri, he had known David Riccio from boyhood and was aware of his diplomatic and Court training.

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The Sieur de Moretta, who is called indifferently "le Marquis de Moretta," "il Conte de Moretta" and "M. de Morette," was the noble Obertino Solaro. He was a Piedmontese seigneur, "homo non admodum copiosus," says Buchanan, but if poor yet *persona grata* at the Savoyard Court. He was sufficiently important to be made Ambassador for the Duke of Savoy to the young Queen of Scots, who had returned to Scotland the young widow of King François II. of France. Now the latter had been a nephew of the Duchess of Savoy, Marguerite de Valois, and so by marriage of the ducal sender of the Embassy, whom the Scots Queen called by courtesy "mon oncle," and regarded with affection as of the French interest—a cardinal point to one who felt on leaving France that she would be until her death "a true Frenchwoman."

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The Ambassador's instructions were various, but they included to talk to the Queen about matters of religion and confirm them Romewards, a scheme to betroth the young Alfonso II. d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, either to the young Queen-widow of Scots, or *faute de mieux* to her virgin cousin Elizabeth of England. David Riccio became the Ambassador's secretary, and in this capacity all the Italian writers speak well of him. One (Labanoff, vii. 65) says that he "molto bene explicava<sup>1</sup> il suo concetto nell' idioma Italiana e fransese, e particolarmente era buon musico"; another (*ibid.*, 86) that he was "accorto, savio, e virtuoso." He seems to have gained the

<sup>1</sup> Melville, as we have hinted, says the contrary. "Seigneur David now enterit to be her Hynes Frenche Secretary, was not very skilfull in dyting of French letters quhilk sche did not wret over again with hir auen hand" (p. 109).

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Ambassador's confidence and favour when he entered Scotland with him about December 1561, from which country he did not escape alive.

## CHAPTER IV

THE Ambassador attended the Queen's "diridge" and Mass for her late husband in December, and then the Savoy Embassy ended in January 1562 and left Scotland. But Riccio to his undoing remained on, and entered the Queen's service by the influence of her uncle the Marquis d'Elbeuf. We have seen how he was recommended to the Queen by another of her uncles, the Cardinal de Lorraine, and she wished for and desired his services; Scottish writers though, however (probably wrongly enough), that he owed his rise more to chance. The Queen had a daily Mass and a choir. Sir James Melville wrote: "Hir majestie had thre varletis of her chamber that sang thre

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partis and wanted a base to sing the fourt part, therefor they told hir majesty of this man to be thir fourt marrow in sort that he was drawn to sing some-tymes with the rest, and efterwart the Ambassadoure his maister retournit he stayed in this contre, and wes retires in hir majestie's service as ane valet of hir chamber." Gossip said that he had obtained admission to the Queen's choir by a bribe, and slept on a chest in Holy-rod, and had attracted the Queen's attention by the beauty of his voice. All this gossip goes for nothing, however, when one thinks of M. d'Elbeuf's introduction and the Cardinal de Lorraine's recommendation. It is obvious that Riccio was not only a courtier and musician but also a man of letters, and all this was an attraction to the young Queen, whose position was fright-

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fully solitary and to whom Riccio's French training commended him. We are told of him "particolarmente era buon musico, dove che la Reina facendo dir sempre la messa nel suo palazzo, poichè era tornata, et pur assai desiderando d'havere una compagnia di musichi, oltre che essa si diletta a cantare et sonar di viola." So when her uncle brought him into her "family" or household he was very welcome. His salary shows this. In the *Compte* of the Collector General, Thirds of Benefices, 1561, which was given up by Sir John Wishart of Pittarro, Knt., Comptroller, 18th February 1563, under the head "Exoneration" we find :

"And of ye soume of threscoir fivene pundis pait be ye Comptare to David rycheo italiane vallet of ye chalmer for his zeirliche pensioun granted to him

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be ye quenis maiestie of ye zein compted as hir hienes l̄res under hir subscrip-tioun, and ye said Daudis acquttance schawin and producit upoun compt pro-portis lxxv li” (Original MS. Gen. Reg. Ho.).

In December 1561 he, as “Daud le Chantre,” received (probably from Servaes de Condey, valet de chambre to the Queen) “viiij draps de brodeurs pour la garniture de son lict” with a like coverlet (*Inventories*, p. 130). On 8th January 1562, as “David Ritio, virlat of the Queenis grace chalmer,” he received £50, and on 16th April he, as “chalmer-cheild,” got xv li (*Treasurer’s Accounts*, p. 158), while the accounts of the “Thirds of Benefices” again shows under “Crop 1562” an entry: “To Daud Riccio, vallet of the chamber, his pensioun of ane hundreth and fifty

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## Sketch Life of David Riccio

frankes extending in Scottis money to lxxv li." In 1564 his salary (says David Laing) was £80 paid quarterly, which was not a bad sum for one whom Knox styled that "pultron and vyle knave Davie," but whom the Queen esteemed. And her esteem grew. Riccio soon became a favourite adviser, and an adviser in the delicate subject of her projects of marriage, and so a power in the realm; for the Queen had to marry. She was alone. There was no heir to the throne of Scotland save her distant cousin, the Duke of Chatelherault, head of the Hamiltons, father of Lord Arran and of dubious loyalty. She knew also she was next heir to the throne of England, if not (as many held) rightful Queen. Crowned suitors were at her feet. There were the flighty King Eric of Sweden, the King of Denmark (whom

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she refused at once), the Dukes of Parma and Nemours, whom she thought of too small power, as she did her own subject and next heir, Lord Arran. Her brother-in-law, Charles IX. of France, was spoken of, but not very seriously. The Archduke Charles seemed more in favour with her Guise kindred, while the match of her own inclination seemed to be Don Carlos, the only son of Philip II. of Spain. It is possible she might have persevered in seeking this alliance had not her mother-in-law, Catherine de Medici, taken alarm. She feared the possible union of Spain and the Indies, England and Scotland against France, and persuaded the Guises to weigh the scales down against the match. So the Queen refused her Protestant suitors and waited for a husband fit to quell her turbulent nobles, strong

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enough to support her, agreeable to her subjects and, if possible, recognised by the occupant of the throne of England, her awful rival and cousin, Queen Elizabeth.

But, during this time of waiting, Holyrood had a Court which was full of youth, beauty and charm. The Queen (in spite of the horror of the kill-joy John Knox, who with the other preachers fulminated against music and amusements), introduced the diversion of masques. Her band of young attendants—her “Marys” or “Maries”—acted in them and gave them grace.

A great Shrovetide Masque was given at Holyrood in February 1564, the most magnificent ever seen in Scotland save at the marriage of a prince. There were three courses, all served by “gentlemen apparelled all in white and black,

## Seigneur Davie

divers that could sing among them," writes the English envoy. One of these was Riccio. A boy with bandaged eyes came in as "Cupid" during the first course, a girl as "Charity" the second, and a child as "Time" the third. During the second and the third of these masques Latin verses by George Buchanan (afterwards Queen Mary's traducer) were sung, the last foretelling the perpetual friendship of the Queen of Scots and Elizabeth of England, while with the first was sung this Italian sonnet, most likely the work of Riccio himself (*Inventaires de la Roynne d'Escosse*, Bannatyne Club, lxxxiii. n. 1, 2). The English Ambassador at Holyrood thought this worthy of sending to Whitehall :

Quest' è colui che'l mondo chiama amore,  
Amaro come vedi et vedrai meglio  
Quando fia tuo, com'è nostro signore  
Mansueto fanciulo et fiero veglio,

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Ben sa ch'il prova, et fiati cosa piana,  
Anzi mill' anni e infin adhor ti sueglio.  
El nacque d'otio et di lascivia humana,  
Nutrito di pensier dolci et soavi,  
Fatto signor et dio da gente vana  
Quale è morto da lui, qual co' più gravi  
Leggi, mena sua vita aspra et acerba,  
Sotto mille cathene et mille chiavi ;

which may be roughly paraphrased :

What is that power that the world calls Love ?  
Bitter if known, worse when he is thine own.  
When thou art in his power he will prove  
A child or tyrant, thou before him prone.  
Is not this felt by those his thralldom rue ?  
I tell you, and my words thou wilt find true,  
If thou shouldst live a thousand years anew,  
Love's born of Leisure and of our Desire,  
Feeds on sweet thoughts and out of fair words  
gains,  
Is made a God by those who feed his fire.  
Some for him die, others with life he pains  
In shackles, fetters, locks, and linked chains.

It was in December 1664 that the culmination of Riccio's good luck came. There was "some displeasure" between the Queen and her French secretary Raulet, perhaps because of his too great

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friendliness with Randolph, the English Ambassador, and she placed David Riccio, although or because he was an Italian, in the vacant post. At once the flood-gates of hatred were again opened. That a foreign singer, a low "musician" (Italian nobility was not much recognised in Scotland), should obtain such a post was intolerable. He was known to be a devout Catholic, he was dubbed a Priest,<sup>1</sup> there was also a bruit "how

<sup>1</sup> The circumstances of Riccio made it quite possible that he might be a priest in secret, but there is no evidence whatever that he was one. Father Pollen says that the Roman papers show that it is extremely improbable that he had any connection whatever with the Vatican. The Bishop of Mondovi wrote to the Cardinal of Allesandria from Paris, 21st August 1566, of him merely as "quel povero David Riccio, Piamontese, Secretario della Regina" (*Papal Negotiations with Mary Queen of Scots*, p. 271, Scottish History Society), in a way which suggests that he was a stranger to the Roman Curia. The present writer's researches in the Vatican archives have yielded no more light. The *Narratio Supplicii et Mortis Mariæ Stuartii* (Vatican MSS., Fondo. Borghese, i. ser. 226, p. 10) simply alludes to him as "Catolici viri Davidis Secretarij Regine."

## Sketch Life of David Riccio

that the said Seigneur David had a pension of the Pope" and was an agent of the King of Spain, who it seems, however, did not know his name till later, and also, almost as bad, that he owed his advancement to being an adept in the black art.

## CHAPTER V

POLITICS, hatred of aliens, unwillingness to sacrifice herself to foreign intrigue, gradually made many of her suitors withdraw from the marriage market, and her renunciation of the greater matches left Mary Queen of Scots rather at a loss. For suddenly her cousin, the Queen of England, proposed as a fit match for her her own gossip or lover, Lord Robert Dudley, whose wife, Amy Robsart, had died a suspicious death, and whom it was thought the English Queen might still marry. It was difficult for the Scots Queen to parry this lunge, but she did it handsomely. She did not allude to Lord



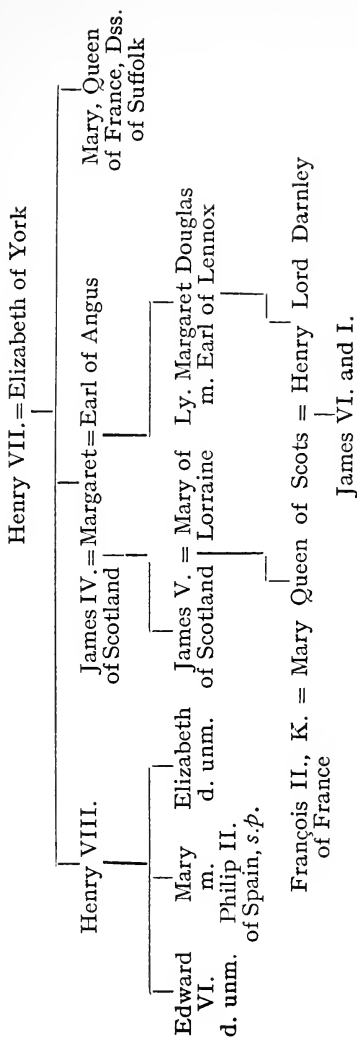
## Sketch Life of David Riccio

Robert as Queen Elizabeth's mignon, still, she let her know she thought this proposed match unequal, and would only submit to it if declared the English Queen's heir-presumptive. Lord Robert blew hot and cold. He was not anxious to go to Scotland and lose his English comfort and support at Court. Then came an interlude. Queen Elizabeth, always anxious for variations in Scottish politics, allowed the Earl of Lennox (Matthew Stuart), who had married her cousin, the Lady Margaret Douglas, daughter of the Queen Dowager of Scotland, Margaret Tudor, to go to Scotland to reclaim his vanished lands. Later went his son, that "long lad" Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, and it was only when he came to Scotland in February 1565 that the young Queen, aided by her French secretary Riccio, saw that he

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was the exact husband the politics of the day required for her. In the first place, he was, after her, next in the English succession. The royal descent was thus :

# GENEALOGICAL TABLE.



## Seigneur Davie

Then he was an Englishman born, though of Scottish descent, and nearest relation both to the Queen of Scots and to the Queen of England. Also his parents (his mother especially) were of the Catholic party.

Darnley had been born at Temple Newsome in 1545, and so was just nineteen when he met the young Scottish Queen at Wemyss. He was very tall and beardless, but handsome, and the Queen and Riccio thought him an ideal match. They did not know (though apparently Queen Elizabeth and the Cardinal de Lorraine did) that he was a wayward boy, addicted to hectoring and giving blows "where he might," not deeply wedded to any special religion or policy, but the elder son of an unscrupulous and needy intriguer, and they forgot too that he also, though of Scottish blood,

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was a stranger to Scottish ways. Darnley had but a small suite with him (one "Master Fowler," his former governor, an Englishman from Kent, was one), and the Queen of Scots attached Riccio to him. The intimacy grew, Riccio even slept beside him at night and counselled him by day. It was he, Melville tells us, that turned the Queen's thoughts definitely to the marriage. No one could have been stronger for the Lennox alliance than Riccio, and he craftily pushed it on. He it was who gained over the Cardinal de Lorraine and got Philip II. of Spain to consent to the match. Perhaps it was at this time that the French secretary gave the Queen the Tortoise Jewel<sup>1</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> The Queen had other jewels of the same kind. In 1561 her inventories show "une pendant faict en facon d'un tortue"; in 1561-2, "ung autre pendant faict en face de tortue"; and in 1566 "vng pendant en tortue." This is the only one where the jewels are described.

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“ Vng aultre enseigne garnye de dix rubiz en tortue auec une perle pandante au bout ” (*Inventories*, p. 123)

as a token — a jewel which the Queen afterwards left to his brother Joseph.

And his plan was successful. High Mass was said at Easter, and here we may trace the hand of Riccio, who was in the Catholic interest. In spite also of the rage of Queen Elizabeth, who threw Darnley's mother into prison and protested by her Council that this Catholic marriage was a danger to religion and her realm, the marriage negotiations went on. A dispensation was besought from the Pope and granted; but long before its arrival Darnley and Mary were, in the middle of the second week of April, privately married at Stirling Castle, in the chamber of the French

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secretary, by a priest introduced for this purpose,<sup>1</sup> and the Italian favourite who had brought about the marriage both for the sake of religion and policy, exclaimed :

“ Laudato sia Dio ! Che le nozze non potranno piu disturbare ”<sup>2</sup> ;

and the bridegroom was made Earl of Ross on 5th May at a ceremony from which his enemy Moray was excluded.

But if the private marriage or *Sposalizio* was over and the union settled, this was not known to the Scots people or to Queen Elizabeth. The latter still protested against it, and the people of Scotland cried out that the fate of the Reformed Religion was at stake.

<sup>1</sup> “ Fossero da un Capellano Catolicamente sposati in camera di esso David ” (Labanoff, vii. 86).

<sup>2</sup> It is much more probable that this exclamation came from Riccio at the *Sposalizio* than at the public marriage, though it could have been made quite justly at either or both.

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The Assembly of the Kirk of 1565, attended by the Earls of Morton, Atholl and Glencairn, remonstrated and insisted that the "Papistical and blasphemous Mass" must be abolished. Moray and Argyll had a plot ready to murder Darnley, whom those worthies already hated and feared, and they were assisted with English money. The Queen made a proclamation that she did not wish to "impede or molest any of her subjects in regard to their religion," and the Queen was for a time the stronger.

Lethington the secretary found himself superseded. On 3rd June 1565 Randolph wrote to Leicester: "David is he that now works all. Chief Secretary to the Queen and Governor to her goodman," so that the dislike of the nobles to the Darnley match grew.



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On the same day Randolph wrote to Cecil (Keith, ii. 259): "Ledington [Lethington] hath not much credit. David now worketh all, and is only Governor to the King and his family. Great is his pride and his words intolerable. People have small joy in this new master and find nothing but that God must either send him a short end or them a miserable life. The dangers to those he now hateth are great, and either he must be taken away or they find some support, that what he intendeth to others may fall upon himselfe. She [the Queen] doteth so much upon her husband [*sic.* the public marriage had not yet taken place] that some report she is bewitched. The parties, the tokens, are named that contain the mysteries." Perhaps it was through this way that Darnley—when King Henry—was brought to

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believe that Riccio was a “necromanciar.”

It is strange to see that the chief “dealers” in the Darnley marriage were, according to Randolph, Riccio, Mingo, another Italian, a valet de chambre, Atholl—Darnley’s Catholic cousin—and Lord Ruthven the Protestant, Riccio’s murderer. The latter, like Riccio, was thought to be a wizard, and indeed did give (as we have seen) the Queen a diamond ring as an antidote to poison.

The Court was at Seton and Dunbar in July, and on the 16th Randolph reported to Cecil that the Queen had only been attended by Lady Erskine, while Lennox, his son, Lord Erskine’s brother, “Sir [Signor] David,” and Monsieur Fowler were her Court, and he mentions after their return to Edinburgh that after dinner the Queen walked from

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the abbey supported on the one arm by Darnley and by Fowler on the other, her train consisting of Lady Erskine, "old Lady Seton," the Earl of Lennox, "and Seignor David with 2 or 3 other," which horrified the Protestant party, as they saw no escape from the marriage.

The Queen's public wedding took place at Holyrood on 29th July. She had granted Darnley the title of Duke of Albany on that day, and had, less wisely, given him the day before, by proclamation, the title of King. A Nuptial Mass was said, which the King did not attend. She had married in her mourning weeds as widowed Queen of France, but after the ceremony changed into gayer dress, and took part in the wedding festivities. David Riccio, who had done so much to bring about this marriage, which he designed to unite Britain, greatly

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rejoiced and received, no doubt for his wedding garment, what is thus entered in the *Royal Inventories* in July 1565 :

“ Plus au Secretairre Dault vne  
piece de veloux noy broche d’or  
contenant x aulnes i quart ” (p. 155),

and on 24th July money to purchase a new bed and hangings.

Moray and Argyll, with their nominal chief, Chatelherault, were now in open rebellion, supported by English gold and with hopes of more assistance from the south. They were joined by the Earls of Glencairn and Rothes, Lords Boyd and Ochiltree, the last the father-in-law of John Knox. Morton, the Chancellor, though of their faction, remained in retreat. Mary now showed her magnanimity by pardoning *sur le champ* the Duke of Chatelherault, next heir to the crown, and some of the other exiles,

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but Moray (though it was said he had sent Riccio a bribe) she refused to pardon at this time. The Earl of Bothwell, who had been loyal to the Queen's mother, returned to Scotland, and though a rigid Protestant was still of the Queen's party. Darnley became for the time less Protestant, tossed a psalm-book into the fire, and put John Knox to silence for a time for insulting the Queen in his preaching. So the hopes of the Catholics must have run high.

This was the period of Riccio's ascendancy. On 10th September, we are told, "David, Fowler [Darnley's tutor] and one Balfour<sup>1</sup> rule all" (Bedford to Cecil).

<sup>1</sup> "This Balfour" was Sir James Balfour, implicated with his brother Gilbert in the murder of Cardinal Bethune, and, like Knox, an ex-galley slave as a result. He was now one of the Lords of Session. His brother Gilbert was made the Queen's "Maister Household," and eventually, having been a traitor to his master, Bothwell, was put to death in Sweden for treachery, he having entered the Swedish service. Both were implicated in Darnley's murder, but James died in the odour of sanctity.

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On 22nd September he and Fowler are associated with "Francis," *i.e.* Signor Francis de Busso, another Italian. It was at this time that a foreign body-guard for the Queen was arranged. German mercenaries were first suggested, but Riccio and de Busso seem very naturally to have preferred Italians as being their own countrymen. This made the reformers fear the worst and speak of a sudden massacre, and made them plot against the Italian. Queen Elizabeth went further and told de Foix (16th October) that "Moray wanted to hang an Italian named David, whom she [Queen Mary] loved and favoured, giving him more credit and authority than was consistent with her interest and honour" (Teulet, ii. p. 93). But all this time Riccio had been growing rich. "Grit men," says Knox, "maid

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courte unto him and thair sutes wer the better heard," and Moray, who had long held out against him, sent him a fair diamond ring, "mair humbly than any man wald have beleued," as a bribe for the Queen's favour. He dressed magnificently, some said to conceal his personal defects, and this awakened jealousy. In December 1565 the Queen gave him

"iiij aulnes de valoux noyr" (*Inventories*, p. 159),

and in the January of next year

"Quatre aulnes de taylle d'or figurree par escaille" (*ibid.*, p. 161),

which showed that she approved of his adornment. He himself took fright and asked counsel from the diplomatist Melville, who advised (citing his own experiences in Germany) humility and caution.

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It dawned on Riccio that Darnley was beginning to distrust him, and that now he had nothing to rely on save the Queen's favour only. This distrust was made the most of by the English. Bedford, in his dispatch to Cecil of 10th September, adds: "What countenance that Queen shows to David, an Italian, he will not name for the honour due to the person of the Queen."

On 7th January 1566 Randolph wrote to Cecil: "David yet retayneth still his place, not without hartgriefe to many that see their Soveraigne guyded chiefly by such a fellowe." Knox writes of the Court life at the end of 1565: "And in the mean time the Queen was busied with banquetting about with some of the Lords of the Session of Edinburgh, and after with all men of law, having continually in her company David Rizio,

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who sat at table near to herself, sometimes more privately than became a man of his condition, for his over-great familiarity was already suspected; and it was thought that by his advice alone the Queen's sharpness and extremity towards the Lords was maintained." Now there were three groups of enemies of the French secretary. First of all there were the banished lords and their friends, then there were the preachers who egged them on, in terror of a mythical "Catholic League" and fearful of a Catholic revival with the Queen as centre, and now as chief enemy came the deluded King consort.

While the Queen's favour to Riccio grew it naturally made the Scots nobles jealous of his influence. The King began to be jealous in a different way. He pressed the Queen to grant him the

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“crown-matrimonial” with its administrative powers, but she, knowing by this time his fatal vacillation of mind, hesitated to entrust him with it. Instead, she placed more power in the hands of the French secretary, Knox says, giving him the King’s seal, and others an “iron stamp” (conveniently “tint” or lost later and never recovered) for affixing his signature to deeds he did not see. This made him dubious of the Queen’s affection, and though she was with child he began to be actively jealous of the clever Italian. On 29th January this jealousy was so notorious that Thomas Randolph wrote to the Earl of Leicester that the Queen of Scots’ faction increases greatly in England, that he fears she is pregnant, and then adds the calumny: “Woe is me for you when David sone shal be a King of England.” Yet both

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were present at a masque in which Riccio acted on 10th February, and on 13th Randolph wrote to Leicester: "I know that there are practices in hand contrived between the father and the son, to come to the Crown against her [the Queen's] will. I know that if that take effect which is intended, David, with the consent of the King, shall have his throat cut within these ten days," and he hints at violence against the Queen. Again on 25th February he wrote to Cecil that Darnley had now allied himself with the Protestants Moray and Argyll, and "the suspicion of this King towards David is so great that it must shortly grow into a scab among them."

## CHAPTER VI

IN spite of the King's hatred and plans of private removal by assassination<sup>1</sup> the Queen's favour of her Italian secretary did not diminish. He was "molto amato da sua maesta," and she continued to reward him. On 28th February he received 2000 in part payment of 10,000 marks for the "duties of the Cunzie-house" or mint, and his growing wealth did not lose by telling. Buchanan (whom it is impossible to trust unsupported) says that "he excelled even the King himself in household stuff and apparel, and in the number of brave and stately horses; and the matter looked the worse for this, because all this ornament did not credit his face, but his face rather spoiled all this ornament." The Queen now,

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* at Todsholes, near Dunsyre, the seat of the Postulate (Strickland's *Queens*, i. 264).

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says the same author, wished to give him "the lustre of dignity and promotion; and that, having qualified him to sit and vote in parliament, she might be the better able to give such a turn as she pleased to the debates of that assembly. But he was so to be advanced by degrees, lest he might seem to be a poor mercenary senator." Be this as it may, the Queen certainly attempted to get an estate for him, and so embroiled herself with many of the nobles, including the very powerful Earl of Morton, the Keeper of the Seals and the owner of Dalkeith, which the Queen visited in October 1565. On 6th March 1566 Thomas Randolph reported to Cecil: "Displeasour is grown towards my lord of Morton—the Seals is taken from him [this was an exaggeration<sup>1</sup>], and as some say shalbe geven to

<sup>1</sup> The Spanish Ambassador believed this also, and Guzman de Silva wrote to Philip II., 30th March

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keape to David as Rubie [a Frenchman employed as we have seen by Queen Marie of Lorraine] had y<sup>m</sup>. The ground of displeasure is that Morton will not give over a piece of ground to Lord Fleming, that thus ' David maye com by a peece of lande called Melvin within iij miles of Edinburg.' On this matter Lord Simple is grown to displeasure and John Simple was committed to ward for speaking against it." Melville—in the beautiful valley of the North Esk—was a frequent scene of Queen Mary's hunting<sup>1</sup> parties,

1566, that "another of the conspirators was the former holder of the Great Seal there, which had been handed over to the secretary David" (*Cal. of State Papers: Spanish*).

<sup>1</sup> The tradition has it that the Queen lodged at Pittendreich, on the other side of the Esk, near Lasswade, an old house, where a plum tree, said to have been planted by her, and a holly and a laurel entwined, according to legend planted by her and Riccio, still grow. At Hollycot, a very old house, near by stands a giant holly also said, by tradition, to have been planted by the Queen.

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and an oak tree there is still called "Rizzio's oak," and tradition has it that under its branches the Italian serenaded his Queen. It belonged at this time to James 4th Lord Ross, but Lord Fleming, who had married on 10th May 1562 Elizabeth Ross, only child of his elder brother Robert, Master of Ross, no doubt possessed certain rights in the barony. Lord Ross was married to Jean, daughter of Robert, Lord Sempill, which accounts for the Sempills' partisanship.

Morton's fear of loss of land and of "the Seals" made him a great accession to the King's faction, and a conspiracy against the Queen began to take shape. Its aim was to remove her Italian favourite, destroy her power, and give it under the style of crown-matrimonial to her weak husband, who would in turn be ruled by one of the more power-

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ful nobles and his party. As will be seen, the Queen's safety and life were little thought of. That this plot was known in Court is shown by the fact that it was reported by Bedford and Randolph to Cecil, 6th March 1566. They report jars between the King and the Queen partly because of the Queen's refusal of the crown-matrimonial, partly "for that he has assured knowledge of herself as altogether is intolerable to be borne," and that there would be the arrest and execution of the man "whom he is able manifestly to charge with the crime and to have done him the most dishonour that can be to any man," and mentions those in the secret as Argyll, Morton, Boyd, Ruthven and Lethington, and in England, Moray, Rothes, Grange, himself and Randolph.

The King had discovered, or fancied he





QUEEN MARY AND HER SINGER  
(The Smeaton-Hepburn Picture)



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had discovered, an assignation between Riccio and his wife in the Queen's chamber. This was made the most of by the English agents, who reported it to the French Ambassador, as we see by his letter to Cecil of 23rd March 1566 how it had been exaggerated as an excuse for the murder as "nothing could be more dreadful than that a deformed and base menial should be caught in the act of adultery with the Queen and slain by her husband."

The affair became more and more complex. The King and nobles pleaded the cause of the banished lords, and Riccio acted as the Queen's mouth-piece against them. This seems to have struck the match. "The King," says Buchanan, "by his father's advice sent for James Douglas [Morton] and Patrick [Lord] Lindsay his kinsmen, one by the

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father, the other by the mother's side, and they advise with Patrick [Lord] Ruthven, an able man both for advice and execution ; but he was so weakened with a long and tedious sickness, that for some months he could not rise out of his bed ; however they were willing to trust him, among some few others, in a matter of such mighty moment, both by reason of his great prudence, and also because his children were cousin-germans to the King. The King was told by them, what a great error he had committed before, in suffering his kinsmen and friends to be driven from Court, in favour of such a base miscreant as Rizzio ; nay, he himself did, in effect, thrust them out from the Court with his own hand, and so had advanced such a contemptible mushroom, that now he himself was despised by him. They had like-

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wise a great deal of other discourse concerning the state of the public. The King was quickly brought to acknowledge his fault, and to promise to act nothing for the future without the consent of the nobility ” (*History of Scotland*, p. 183).

But the fear of the Queen’s influence over her husband as well as the custom of Scotland in any emergency, made the nobles insist on the signing by the King and themselves of a “ Band ” or bond for their mutual support in their wrongdoing. There were two “ Bands ”: the first, signed by the King, Morton and Ruthven, declared that the Queen’s “ gentle and good nature ” was taken advantage of especially by an Italian called David, and that the King and his nobles were to seize these enemies “ and to cut them off immediately and

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to slay them wherever it happened " if they resisted. The King was to defend them from evil consequences. In the other " Band " the banished lords bound themselves to support the King in his claim to the crown-matrimonial and " in all his quarrels," and he in turn to pardon them (*Miscellany of the Maitland Club*, V. iii. pp. 188-191). All this was black treachery to the Queen, whom they meant to supplant.

The nobles obtained money from Randolph, the English Ambassador, whom Mary dismissed. The Rebel leaders were, however, now at Newcastle, and Lennox was permitted to go to England. Two bonds were signed. By the first the King consort bound himself to obtain the pardon of the fugitive lords as soon as by their help he had gained the crown-matrimonial. He promised restoration

## Sketch Life of David Riccio

of their estates and freedom of religion. In the second bond, signed 2nd March, the signatories bound themselves to obtain from Parliament after their return, power to maintain Henry Lord Darnley in his "just title" to the crown of Scotland "failing of succession of our Sovereign lady," thus ousting the legal successor, the Duke of Chatelherault, head of the Hamiltons, and heir to the crown (see Barbaro's dispatch, 30th April 1566, *Cal. of State Papers : Venetian*).

On 6th March Bedford and Randolph wrote to the Queen of England that a "matter of no small consequence" was soon to occur in Scotland, and "we hope that by this means my Lord of Moray shall be brought home without your Majesty's further suit or means to the Queen his sovereign."

Queen Mary—Darnley refusing, lest

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he should not be acknowledged as King's consort, to accompany her—opened the Scottish Parliament on 7th March. The business done was the summoning of the rebel lords to appear on the 12th March under forfeiture of their estates, and it was carried, though some thought "the matter of treason was not sufficiently proved."

Trouble for the Italian favourite was known to be brewing, and though he was reputed a necromancer himself, an Italian or Frenchman reputed to dabble in the black art and magic, M. d'Amiot (Jehan Damyte), whom Calderwood calls "a French priest and a sorcerer,"<sup>1</sup> warned him of his danger and especially "to be-

<sup>1</sup> Christian Saidler in Blackhouse, "a wysse wyffe," was "wirreit at ane staik" on the Castle Hill of Edinburgh in November 1597 as a witch for effecting cures by prescriptions obtained "frae ane Italian Strangear callit M: Johnne Damiot" (Pitcairn's *Criminal Trials*, pp. 25-29).



## Sketch Life of David Riccio

ware of the Bastard." Thinking this referred to the Earl of Moray, a fugitive in England and suing for Riccio's Court favour, the Italian treated this lightly, though d'Amiot's advice was backed up by that of Signor Francisco, both advising him to settle his affairs and leave Scotland to his opponents and enemies. Riccio replied that "they were mere ducks, strike one of them and the rest would be in," but d'Amiot wisely answered: "You will find them geese, if you handle one of these the rest will fly upon you and pluck you so that they will leave neither feather nor down upon you." But he still thought himself secure, and on the very eve of his fall Darnley was treacherous enough to veil his feelings and play tennis with him.

And now it is necessary to look at the names of some of those who signed

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the "Band" against him and try to show why they were in the plot. We take first the King, Ruthven and Lindsay (the second of the banished lords), Moray, Argyll, Glencairn and others.

At first sight it looks like a Douglas conspiracy against the Queen in favour of her husband, whose mother was a Douglas. Morton was a Douglas and a cousin to the last; Lindsay, a cousin to the King by his mother, a Stuart of Atholl, was married to a Douglas, Moray's half-sister. Ruthven's first wife had been Janet Douglas, half-sister to the Countess of Lennox. Among the banished lords, Moray, whose mother had married a Douglas, was fishing in troubled waters, conspiring against the Queen, his half-sister. Argyll, whose wife was also half-sister to the Queen, and with whom he was at variance, was in a like boat.

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Both were *frondeurs*. The other banished lords had their own reasons for wishing restoration. In addition, there was the secretary, Maitland of Lethington, that chameleon of politics, and the soldier Kirkcaldy of Grange. Behind these were the unseen powers, the preachers Knox and Craig, who on Sunday, 3rd March, at the national fast, seized the opportunity to denounce idolaters violently from their pulpits, choosing texts from the Old Testament which encouraged the destruction of those who persecuted the people of God; and Oreb, Zeeb, Sisera and Haman were all cited, and Knox afterwards described the deed as "an act worthy of all praise."

The Douglas faction no doubt took heart at these quotations from Holy Writ, and planned the murder of the French secretary. The only person who had

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heard no rumour of it, save from fears of plot against plot in her turbulent Court, was the Queen. The conspirators at first wanted the secretary seized privately and quickly hanged, as had been done in July 1484 to Robert Cochrane, the favourite of King James III., created by him Earl of Mar; but this was not enough for the jealous King: he wished a public insult put upon his wife. This is Lord Ruthven's relation of what happened:

“ And after the King's return out of Seaton, he directed George Douglas to the Earl of Morton and Lord Ruthven, to see what day should be appointed, with place and time, for the performance of the enterprise against David. The said Earl and Lords sent answer to the King, and declared they should have a sufficient number ready against

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Friday or Saturday the 8th or 9th of March to do what he pleased . . . they thought it best to take them when David should be in his own chamber in the morning or in passing through the close ; which the King refused simpliciter, and said he could not be well taken in the morning, by reason that at night he tarried late with the Queen's Majesty : he lay in the over cabinet, and other whiles in Signor Francisco's chamber, and sometimes his own, to which he had sundry back doors and windows that he might escape at, and if so it were all were lost. Therefore he would have him taken at the time of the supping, sitting with her Majesty at the table, that he might be taken in her own presence : because she had not entertained him, her husband, according to her accustomed manner, nor as she ought in duty.

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To the which the said Earl and Lords were very loth to grant, and gave many reasons to the contrary, that it was better to have been done out of her presence, not in the same. Notwithstanding, no reason might avail, but the King would have him taken in her Majesty's presence, and devised the manner himself"; and the dastardly murder took place.

## CHAPTER VII

ON Saturday, 9th March, the blow fell. Lords Morton and Lindsay surrounded Holyrood with 300 of their followers, and by the connivance of Stewart of Traquair, Commander of the Guard, 150 of these guarded the palace. These forbade every courtier to leave its precincts, while Saunders Guttry "kept the abbey gate," and had been commanded by Darnley "to have an eye" to the Queen's doings.<sup>1</sup> The King and his confederates, among whom were Lords Morton and Lindsay, supped early and

<sup>1</sup> It is satisfactory to know that this spy was, through the Ambassador of Scotland and the Cardinal de Lorraine, imprisoned at Dieppe (Sir Thos. Hoby to Cecil, 18th May 1566).

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treacherously bided their time. That evening between seven and eight the Queen was at supper with her own special *coterie* in the little cabinet "about twelve footes square" which entered from her bedroom, and which had but one other entrance by the staircase from the King's room below. She was partaking of meat for her health's sake, and was seated at the centre of a small table, her bastard sister, the Countess of Argyll, at the other end, her brother, Lord Robert Stuart, seated, and David Riccio at the head of the table, Arthur Erskine, the Laird of Creich, the French apothecary and one or two in attendance. The Italian secretary wore a gown of damask, furred, a satin doublet and hose of russet velvet and *à la mode de France*, had his hat on his head. The King entered by the private staircase from his room, and

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going up to the Queen kissed her, and she said, "Have you yet supped?" He said little, and was followed almost immediately by the pale and gaunt Lord Ruthven, white from his recent illness, clad in full armour. George Douglas the postulate (who claimed from Moray "a parsonage or title worth £100 a year for his share in the night's work"<sup>1</sup>) and two of his followers. Lord Ruthven commanded the Italian to depart from the room, which was no place for him. The Queen answered that it was by her will that he was there, and when the King said "it was agaynste her honour," put herself before the secretary to protect him. The Queen ordered Ruthven to leave, but instead of that he sat down, and when Arthur Erskine and others of the Queen's party

<sup>1</sup> Drury to Cecil, 20th June 1566. He died Bishop of Moray.

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tried to seize him, drew his rapier, saying, "Lay no hands on me. I will not be handled," and continued to demand the execution of Riccio. The Queen said that if he had offended he might be tried, and appealed to the King, reminding him of his past services, but the Italian himself saw that his last hour had come.

And it had. The rest of the conspirators, headed by Morton and Lindsay, now flocked through the other door of the Queen's room, raising the slogan "A Douglas! a Douglas!" and an awful scene ensued. Darnley detached the wretched Riccio, who was clinging to the Queen's skirt and calling, "Jiustizia, jiustizia, sauve ma vie, Madame!" He was torn from her and thrown into the next room. In the tumult and disturbance the table was overturned, dishes, plates and goblets were scattered, and Lady Argyll only

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prevented total darkness by catching one of the falling candles. The Queen's life was threatened, Andrew Kerr of Fauldonside presenting a loaded pistol at her heart and Patrick Bellenden—brother of the Justice Clerk—a dagger. Anthony Standen parried Bellenden's rapier with the torch he had held to light the music of the Queen and Riccio. Then George Douglas the postulate stabbed the wretched Italian over the Queen's shoulder, which was the beginning of the end.

Ruthven put the Queen into Darnley's arms and told him to protect her, and the murderers continued their ghastly work in the next room. Riccio was dragged along, every conspirator giving a stroke, and in their hasty "jabbing" often wounding each other. "He was not slayne in the Quene's presence as was

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saide but going down the stayres oute of the Chambers of Presence." George Douglas struck the first blow, justifying the prophecy that he would die "by the hand of a bastard"—and with the King's poignard—and the unfortunate Italian died, having some fifty-six daggers plunged into his body. His body was rifled (a jewel of some price that hung round his neck was never seen again), and the poor corpse was hurled down the principal staircase. This gave his enemies an opportunity to vilify him; "and at the King's command, in the mean time, Davie was hurled down the steps of the stairs from the place where he was slain, and brought to the porter's lodge; where the porter's servant taking off his clothes, said, 'This hath been his destiny: for upon this chest was his first bed when he entred

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into this place ; and now here he lieth again, a very ingrate and misknowing knave.' The King's whiniard was found sticking in Davie's side after he was dead ; but always the Queen inquired where his whiniard was ? Who answered, that he wit not well : well, said she, it will be known afterwards'' (*Lord Ruthven's Relation*, p. 45).

No doubt Riccio's own chamber was examined also. The Earl of Bedford reported : " Of the greate substance he had, there is mucche spoken. Some saye in golde to the value of two thousand pounds sterling. His apparell was verie goode ; as it is sayde, fourteen payre of velvet hose. His chamber well furnished : armour, daggs, pystolettts, harquebusses, twenty-two swords. Of all this nothinge spoiled, nor lacking, saving two or three daggs. He had the custodie of all the

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Quene's letters which all were delivered unlooked upon." These, in a "black coffer full of writings and cyphers," were delivered to the King and Queen through the grace of Lord Lindsay and the Earl of Morton, while the chamber was entrusted to the keeping of John Sempill, son to the Lord Sempill, "with the whole goods therein: gold, silver and apparel being therein," and of this treasure we hear no more.

The way the tragedy was regarded in Edinburgh is shown by the entry in the *Diary* of Robert Birrell (p. 5):

"9 Day of March 1566. Seigneour David Risius ane Italiane quha wes the Quenie's Secretary; a man very skilfull in music and poetry, wes slaine in her majestie's presence by the Lord Ruthven and uthiris his complicis."

And in the Kirk Session Records of

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the Canongate is this notice: " Mons<sup>r</sup> Singnior David wes slane in Halyrud house the ix day of Merche anno 1565." While the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh only record the payment of " the soume of iiij li. vij. s. vj <sup>d.</sup>" for " tua dosone and allevin torches " to the " walks maker " who supplied the " gude toun at thair command " with flambeaux, to allow the Town Official to " vise the Quenis grace immediatle after the slauchter of umquhile Seinzeour David Riccio."

## CHAPTER VIII

Now, although Riccio was dispatched and the Queen's confessor, Black, found dead in bed, the doings of the conspirators were by no means at an end. The murder was only the first part of their conspiracy, the second and third part of which were to reft the power from the Queen regnant and transfer it nominally to the King and really to themselves. The Queen was told by two authorities, in one instance by one of her ladies, that the unfortunate secretary was killed. Then she broke into reproaches about her husband's part in the affair, became calmer, and said she "would study revenge."

Meanwhile the Queen had remonstrated



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with Darnley on the shame he had done her. He pleaded jealousy, that her favour to the secretary had grown to such an extent that "ye bare me little company, except Davie had been the third marrow, and after supper your Majesty hath a use to set at the cards with the said Davie, till one or two of the clock after midnight; and this is the entertainment I have had of you this long time." Again he animadverted about the crown-matrimonial. "I am your head, and ye promised obedience at the day of our marriage and that I should be equal with you, and participant in all things. I suppose you have used me otherwise by the persuasions of Davie." The Queen renounced him as her husband and said that she would never like him well "till I gar you have as sore a heart as I have presently." Lord Ruthven,

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who had come back, tried to stop these conjugal recriminations, but was interrupted by the Queen's remark: " 'Why may I not,' sayth she, 'leave him as well as your wife did her husbände? Others have done the like.' " He then felt faint from the tumult, saying, " This I must do with your Majestie's pardon," and sitting down on a coffer, called for wine. This was brought by a French server, and the Queen asked, " Is this your sickness, Lord Ruthven? " She told him that if she or her child perished revenge would be done on him by her friends, the King of Spain, the Emperour, her brother-in-law the King of France, her Lorraine kinsmen and the Pope. Lord Ruthven answered that " these noble Princes were over-great personages to meddle with such a poor man as he was " ; that if anything had been done

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that night which the Queen "misliked" she had to charge her husband and not her subjects with it, "which the King confessed was of verity." Then came an interlude. The Earls of Huntly, Atholl, Bothwell, Caithness and Sutherland, Lords Fleming and Lethington the secretary, Tullibardine, Comptroller, and the Laird of Grant, all of the Queen's party, knocked at the Queen's door. Lord Ruthven went out, told them all that had passed had been by the King's devise, and showed them his signature and told them that the banished lords were by the King's will on their way home. Though there was an appearance of reconciliation, the Earl of Atholl was not satisfied, but waited while the Lords Bothwell and Huntly, Lethington and others descending by ropes from a low window, fearing for their lives,

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escaped through "the litle garding wher the Lyons are lugit" and "wente that night to suche places where theie thoughte them selves in most saufitie." The King meanwhile told the Queen about his recall of the banished lords. She replied she was not to blame for their long exile.

The Provost and citzens of Edinburgh now came to the outer court of Holyrood to know what the tumult was. The Queen, under threat of being "cut into collops," was prevented from answering, and they were answered by Darnley (the Queen being held back with violence) that all was well, that it had been a quarrel amongst the Queen's Frenchmen and Papists at Mass, and that they were commanded to return to their houses. Then Ruthven again came to the Queen's chamber, to be faced with the question where was the Italian?

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“ The said Lord Ruthven answered that he believed he was in the King’s chamber ; for he thought it not good to show her as he died, for fear of putting her majesty to greater trouble presently.” The Queen taunted him with the “ great kindness ” between himself and Moray, who had accused him of being a sorcerer and of giving her a ring as an antidote to poisoning, and many recriminations ensued. It was not surprising that at length even Lord Ruthven saw that “ the Queen’s Majesty was weary ” and needed rest. They withdrew, leaving the Queen to her ladies, and made the necessary arrangements for the remission of the flight of the fugitive earls. The King then signed a writing to the Edinburgh officials to allow no Catholics to quit their houses, as well as other means of preventing tumults. The Earl of Atholl,

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Sir James Balfour, Lords Fleming and Livingstone escaped from the palace; and so passed the first night after the murder.



## CHAPTER IX

AN agitating day followed. The next morning the Queen sent to the Provost of Edinburgh for assistance. He "wist not what to do," for Darnley was in full power and had proclaimed himself so at the Mercat Cross. The Queen was a prisoner. Darnley sent his Master of the Horse, William Standen, to visit her. He was denied. The Queen, saying she feared a miscarriage, sent for her Maries. They were refused her. Darnley went himself, and found her in such distress that he permitted her ladies to be about her. Lord Ruthven believed this to be her dissembling, "having been educated at the French Court"; and the Queen showed herself worthy of this reproach

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or praise of her powers, for she, through John Sempill the Keeper, of his wife her "Marie," Mary Livingstone, was able to get a casket, the black coffer, of the murdered secretary's papers and ciphers. This trafficking with her maidens did not escape the keen and Protestant eye of Lord Ruthven who, fearful of the Queen's escape veiled, gave orders that none of her ladies should pass "undismuffled." Morton, dreading a reconciliation between the King and Queen, entered her presence and demanded the bestowal of the crown-matrimonial, but the Queen riposted that she was a prisoner and her acts invalid.<sup>1</sup> Late in the afternoon the banished lords, the Earls of Moray and Rothes, Sir John Wishart

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to notice that Morton in his last words before his execution expressed no contrition for the murder of Riccio, which he called "the slaughter of Davie."



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of Pittarro, the Laird of Grange, and James Haliburton, Tutor of Pitcur, among others, arrived with startling suddenness and surprising appositeness for their own schemes in Edinburgh, and went straight to the vacant Parliament Hall. Then they proceeded to the Abbey, and were not only admitted but well received by Darnley. They were admitted to the presence of the Queen, who embraced Moray and begged his aid. He comforted her, but continued to intrigue against her, and contrived to inflame the old hatred Darnley had for him, and fearing worse from Moray, unnamed terrors drove him back into the arms and into the power of his wronged wife. He also found himself a prisoner and unable to escape from Holyrood and forced to make terms with the Queen. He visited her on 11th March and urged her for-

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giveness of the conspirators. She temporised. Her ladies and the French doctor feared a miscarriage. The Lords Morton, Moray and Ruthven disbelieved it, but Darnley declared "that the Queen was a true princess," thus setting his own former jealousy at naught.

The Queen received the lords, told them that she was not vindictive, and ordered them to prepare their excuses. She continued a prisoner at their hands, however, until Darnley gave them guarantees that he would be her keeper. Ruthven protested, and threw any mischief that might come upon his head; but now at least the pair were free, and the assailants withdrew to the Earl of Morton's house. The royal pair resolved on immediate flight. Next morning a little cavalcade of seven, upon five horses—the Queen behind Arthur Erskine, the

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King, the Laird of Traquair with Margaret Carwood, Standen and Bastian—rode off from Holyrood. They had fled through the chapel, and as they did so “they crossed,” says Nau, “the cemetery in which lay buried the body of the late David, and almost over the grave itself. Oppressed by a sudden fear, the King began to sigh. The Queen, who knew nothing about the grave, asked what troubled him. He answered, ‘Madame, we have just passed by the grave of poor David. In him I have lost a good and faithful servant, the like of whom I shall never find again. Every day of my life I shall regret him. I have been miserably cheated.’ He was interrupted in his talk, for it was feared that he might be overheard.” Then, according to the Earl of Lennox’s accusation, the Queen was heard to

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say that "a fatter than he should lie as low ere the year was out." They mounted and rode in haste first to Seton, then to Dunbar, and so escaping, in spite of the hardships and danger to the Queen, outwitted the rebels who, with the exception of Moray and Glencairn (who made his submission), fled to England vowing vengeance on Darnley, as he had been a traitor to their party.

The Earls of Huntly and Bothwell hastened to the Queen's aid, and the latter reaped the fruits of the forfeiture of the fugitives. The Queen now became strong enough to return (from Haddington) to Edinburgh on 18th March. Moray received a pardon, and even Darnley received what exoneration was possible, though his father was not admitted to the Queen's presence.

The King protested before the Council

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that he was innocent of the late events, and a proclamation that it was treason to implicate him in the Riccio murder was made on 21st March at the Mercat Cross, "which," says Buchanan, "excited laughter amidst all this sorrow." Two persons (the chiefs being fled) were put to death for Riccio's murder. They were Thomas Scot of Cambusmichael, Sheriff-depute of Perth, who was denounced by Darnley, and Henry Zair or Yair, a renegade priest, both servants of Ruthven and amongst the murderers. They were both hanged and quartered and their goods escheated on 2nd April. William Harlaw and John Mowbray, Edinburgh citizens, were reprieved at the scaffold foot by the intercession of Bothwell, while more than fourteen others (mostly indwellers in Dalkeith and the neighbourhood and therefore creatures of Mor-

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ton) were tried on 6th April for “ treasonable imprisonment, wacheing, warding and imprisoning of our Soueran Lady within her Palice of Holyrudhouse ” and put under surety. The most guilty were beyond the Queen’s power.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr Davidson, minister of Liberton, when threatening the Earl of Gowrie, just before the Raid of Ruthven which brought him to the scaffold, said, in 1582: “ If things go forward as they are intended, your head, my Lord, will pay for Davie’s slaughter,” alluding of course to his father’s share in the Riccio murder.

## CHAPTER X

MARY now was able to give burial to the body of her slain servant, and for this she was much blamed. Buchanan says that she first "caused Riccio's body which had been buried before the door of a neighbouring church to be removed at night and to be deposited in the sepulchre of the late King and his children," the royal tomb of her father, King James V., at Holyrood House, "and to increase the indignity of the affair she put the miscreant almost into the arms of Magdalene (of) Valois, the late Queen." There is surely exaggeration in this. Drury wrote to Cecil, 17th April: "The Queen also (as is said) has caused the body of Davy to be taken

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up." That it was only temporarily placed in the royal vault is shown by the next dispatches, 20th April, "of the taking up of the body of David, his being laid in the tomb where the Queen's father lies, and to avoid such speech as has passed of the same is placed in another part of the church."<sup>1</sup> The same thing was reported to Queen Catherine de Medici, and also the news that the Queen had taken into her service on the 26th, in succession to the late French secretary, his younger brother Joseph Riccio, "monstrant le vouloir beaucoup avancer, encores qu'il ne soit que un jeune homme

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps from the older writers, rightly enough, calling the Abbey-church of Holyrood the Canongate church, the curious legend has grown that Riccio was buried in the present Canongate church, which was not erected until after 1688, and a stone is pointed out as his grave. Another curious legend told in the Canongate is that "Lady Jane Grey lived here." Poor Lady Jane Grey, who never left England!



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de xvij ans et de nulle suffisance.” This was an unwise step of the Queen, as it was natural that Joseph Riccio should distrust those who had killed his brother, but the Queen made the gift “ d’ou les malveillans prennent occasion de mesdire,” and took him, who had arrived in Scotland early in April with the French envoy, Michel de Castelnau, Sieur de Mauvissière, into favour as early as the 29th (Drury), and Darnley made no protest, and indeed wrote on 6th May to the King of France exculpating his part in the murder.

Le Roy d’Ecosse.

4 May 1566.

À Monsieur mon bon frere le Roy de France.

Monsieur, mon bon frere, j’ay recue par le Sieur de Mauvissiere les l<sup>res</sup> que par luy vous a pleu m’ecrire et entendu le credit decelles qui ne m’a donne peu de facherie pour appercevoir par iceluy combien a tort le bruit m’a rendu coupable d’un faict lequel j’aborre tout. Mais dautre part esperant

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que mon innocence entendue par le sud  
Sieur de Mauvissiere auquel j'ay d'eclairer  
la verité de tout ne permettra que imprimez  
autre que bonne opinnoyn de moy. Je  
suis hors de ceste peyne me confiant en sa  
suffisance pour ne faire tort a laquelle. Je  
finiray la p<sup>nte</sup> Priant le Createur vous  
donner Monsieur mon bon frere en bonne  
santé tres heureuse et tres longue vie. De  
Lislebourg le vj jour de May 1566. Votre  
affectioné bon frere. HENRY.<sup>1</sup>

Mary was not less anxious to put matters straight. She was advised by the Council on 5th April to take up residence in Edinburgh Castle for her child's birth. Desirous of doing what was right for her realm, she held a Court to receive Moray and the banished lords. Atholl, Huntly, Bothwell and Moray met at a banquet. Makgill was "relaxed," and Lethington would have been forgiven had it not been for Darnley.

<sup>1</sup> Brit. Mus. MSS., Egerton, 2805.



RIZZIO'S OAK

(From the *ex-libris* of Violet, Viscountess Melville)



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Moray's star was in the ascendant, and he became Master of the Castle, so Darnley withdrew to Holyrood. Ruthven died at Newcastle, 13th June 1566. There were many "soughs" still of the Holyrood tragedy.

We notice that on 29th May Riccio's horses were to be delivered to Lord Robert Stuart, Commendator of Holyrood House.

On 16th June Captain Cochrane wrote to Cecil: "The death of Davye has changed the great traffic held of long between Scotland and the Cardinal of Lorraine, the Scots bishops, the Pope and Spain, yet matters were so far advanced that they still continue their labours." In June 1566 Drury wrote to him that "David's brother is growing fast into favour," and that George Douglas demanded from Moray as reward for his

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share of the Riccio murder a parsonage or title worth £100 a year.

The Queen desirous, if she was to die, to die at peace with all men, made a will. She thought royally. Her first bequest was her diamond "The Great Harry" to her kingdom, with other jewels; then comes—in token of her reconciliation—bequests to the King. There are twenty-six of these, and one is of a diamond ring enamelled in red. "It was with this ring that I was married; I leave it to the King who gave it to me."<sup>1</sup> The Guises, the courtiers and friends have many bequests, nor were the Earl and Countess of Lennox forgotten. More important yet is the tortoise jewel given

<sup>1</sup> Can this be the last of this ring? "Mr Archibald Douglas has the Q. marage ring q<sup>lk</sup> is not laid in wed to him, but he has oy<sup>r</sup> Jewells in wed of xiiij. ii." No date. c. 1572-4 (MS. Household Papers, Q. Mary, Gen. Reg. Ho.).

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by the murdered secretary, which is bequeathed to his brother, "a Joseph que son frere mauoyt done," and to show her confidence Joseph Riccio is entrusted with two secret bequests, "a Joseph pour porter a celui que je luy ai dit," an emerald set in white enamel, and "vne bague garnye de vingt ung diamens tout grands que petis"; bequeathed, "A Joseph pour bailler a que je lui ay dit dont il ranuoir aquitance."

All these bequests, magnificent though they were, were to take effect only if the Queen and the child died. If he lived he was to be heir to all; and in Edinburgh Castle was born, 19th June 1566, the child who, in spite of all the turbulent scenes about him, lived to be the first King to unite Britain as James VI. and I., and it was the father, Lord Darnley, who intimated the fact

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of the birth to his wife's uncle, the Cardinal de Lorraine.

The melancholy interview between the Queen and the King—which vindicated the Queen—must be told in the words of Lord Herries :

“About two a clock in the afternoone, the King came to visitt the Queen, and was desyrous to see the chyld. ‘My Lord (sayes the Queen) God hes given you and me a sone, begotten by none but you!’ At which words the King blusht and kisst the chyld. Then she tooke the chyld in her arms, and, discovering his face, said, ‘My Lord, heer I protest to God, and as I shall answer to him at the great day of judgment, this is your sone, and no other man’s sone! and I am desyrous that all heer, both ladies and others, bear witnes; for he is so much your owen sone that I



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fear it be the worse for him heerafter !’  
Then she spoke to Sir William Stainley.  
‘ This (says she) is the sone whome, I  
hope, shall first unitt the two Kingdoms  
of Scotland and England !’ Sir William  
answered ‘ Why, Madam ? Shall he suc-  
ceed before your majestie and his father ?’  
‘ Because (sayes she) his father has  
broken to me.’ The King was by and  
heard all. Sayes he ‘ Sweet Madam,  
is this your promeis that you made to  
forgive and forgett all ?’ The Queen  
answered ‘ I have forgiven all, but will  
never forgett ! What if Fawdonsyd’s  
pistoll had shott, what wold have become  
of him and me both ? Or what estate  
wold you have been in ? God onlie  
knows, but we may suspect !’ ‘ Madam  
(answered the King), these things are  
past.’ ‘ Then, sayes the Queen, let  
them goe.’ ”



## APPENDICES



## APPENDIX I

THE names of the conspirators given by the Earl of Bedford and Randolph to the Council of England, 27th March 1566, are as follows, and there is the pithy note : " My Lord of Murraye by a special servante sent unto us desireth Your Honor's favour to these noblemen, as his dere frends, and suche as for his sake hath given this adventeur." The list is headed : " The names of such as were doers and of counsell in this laste attemptate, committed at Edenb. the 9th of March 1566.

" The Earle of Morton ; Lord Ruthen ; Lord Lyndesaye ; the Master of Ruthen ; Lord of Liddington, Secret. Mr James Magil, Clerke of the Regester ; Sir

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John Balendin ; Justice Clerke ; St Come ; Mr Adam Ersken, Abbot of Combuskenethe ; Larde of Drumwhustle, called Conyngham ; Larde of Carse, Montethe ; Larde Balvarde, Murray ; Larde of Loughleven ; his brother that married the heyres of Bouchan, Andrewe Carre of Fawdensyde ; Ormeston ; Brimston ; Elpheston ; Hauton ; Cauder ; Streuehauke ; Patricke Balentine ; Whittingham ; Patrick Murray of Tibbermoore ; Tho. Scott, Under Sherif of Stretherne ; Larde of Carmichell ; Andrewe Conyngham, sone of the Erle of Glencarne ; Mr Andrewe Haye ; Mr Archibald Duglas ; George Duglas ; uncle to the King ; Alex. Ruthen, brother to the Lord Ruthen.

“ All these men of good livings, besides a number of other gentlemen, imprisoned—the Larde of Danlangricke, in Eden-

## Sketch Life of David Riccio

bourg Castle ; the Larde of Wetherbone, in Dunbar Castle ; the Provoste of Glenclouden, sone to Doml. in the Blacknesse.

“ The Erle of Lenox commanded from the Courte ” (Wright’s *Queen Elizabeth and her Times*, I. pp. 232-3).





## APPENDIX II

### RICCIO AS A MUSICIAN

THERE is a persistent tradition that Riccio's songs made a mark on the music of the land of his service, and that the songs of Scotland were influenced by his Italian melodies. Irvine, who wrote in the seventeenth century, says that he was "a Savoyard well acquainted with state policy and a great musician," and it may well be that he or the other Italians in the Scottish service did mould a song or two, but according to a quotation in William Dauney's *Ancient Scottish Melodies* this is not the only claim. "It appears also," says that authority, "that he was edu-

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cated in France, and that the French ascribe to him compositions of some of *their* popular airs of uncertain parentage —with what truth we know not. “ Rizzio est l’auteur d’un grand nombre d’airs que tout le monde chante sans qu’en sache de qu’ils sont, comme ‘ M. le Prevôt des Marchands.’ ‘ Notre curé ne veut donc pas,’ &c. Laborde’s *Essai sur la Musique*, Tom. iii. p. 350 ” (*Ancient Scottish Melodies*, by William Daune, Bannatyne and Maitland Club, pp. 171, 172, 293).

## APPENDIX III

### JOSEPH RICCIO

FRASER TYTLER says (vii. pp. 59, 60):  
“ All that we know regarding him is,  
that the Queen treated him with favour ;  
and Lennox, after the assassination of  
the King, publicly named him as one  
of the murderers.” There exists a letter  
of his to Joseph Lutyni, an Italian  
also in the Queen’s service, who had been  
sent on a mission to France (6th January  
1566-7), but had only got as far as Ber-  
wick when the Queen sent an urgent  
request to Sir William Drury, the Marshal  
of Berwick, to detain him on the charge  
that he had stolen some of her money.  
Drury then wrote to Cecil : “ And there-

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fore giveth me to think, by all that I can gather as well of the matter as of the gentleman that it is not it [the money] that the Queen seeketh so much, as to recover his person: for I have learned the man had credit there, and now the Queen mistrusteth lest he should offer his service here in England and thereby might, with better occasion, utter something either prejudicial to her, or that she would be loath should be disclosed but to those she pleaseth” (Drury to Cecil, 23rd January 1566-7; Berwick). Somehow Drury got into his possession an Italian letter which Joseph Riccio addressed to Lutyni. Tytler gives this comment: “It appears to me certain, from Riccio’s letter, that Lutyni had become acquainted through him with some secret, the betrayal of which was a matter of life and death: that Mary

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## Sketch Life of David Riccio

suspected that he had stolen or read some of her private papers; that she had determined to examine him herself upon this point and that everything depended on his deceiving the Queen on his return, by adhering to the tale which had been already told her.”

We give the letter:

JOSEPH RICCIO TO JOSEPH LUTYNI.

SIGNOR JOSEPH,

Io ho ditto a la Regina e a Thimoteo che voi m'havete portato via i miei denari, e la causa che io lo ditto e per quel, che voi intenderete.

Quando noi fumo tornati di Starlino Thimoteo domando dove erano i vostri cavalli e le vostre robbe. Io li dissi che le vostre robbe erano drento il vostro coffano e Lorenzo Cagnoli li disse che voi havevi portato tutto con voi, insieme con i vostri cavalli, e che voi l'havete ditto, “io ho bene abuzato il segretario perche pensa che le miei

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robbe siano drento il mio coffano, ma non ve niente.”

Quando Thimoteo intese questo comincio a dire, “Cosi m’havete abuzato, Mr. Segretario, la regina me ne fara la’ ragione, “ e cosi trova Bastia e lo fa dire a la Regina, ch’io l’havevo assicurato, che voi eri andato per suoi affari, e che su quello m’haveva prestato cento scudi, e tutti cominciorno a dire che li era qualche cattivaria, e chio la sapeva e che voi havevi buttato le mani nelli pappieri della Regina: e io, che non voleva esser suspessionato, comincio a dire che voi m’havevi portato via sei Portoghese, e cinque nobili, e che m’havete promisso di mi lassare i vostri cavalli, e la Regina subito mi dimanda “Dove sono i miei braccialetti?” e io li dissi che voi li havevi portati conesso voi, e che erano drento la borsa con i miei denari, e Bastia comincia a dire che voi li dovevi sesanta franchi, e cominciano a dire tutti, bisogna mandarli appresso, e fanno tanto, che la Regina comanda a Ledinton di fare una lettera per vi fare arrestare per camino.

In questa mezo, Monsieur di Moretta

## Sketch Life of David Riccio

e arrivato qui, il quale dice che voi li havete ditto, che io ero causa, che voi fate questo viaggio.—Pigliate guardia come voi havete parlato, perche se voi dite per quello che andavi, noi saremo tutti dui in gran pena. Io ho sempre ditto che voi eri andato per pigliar denari, e per lassar passar la collera della regina che l'haveva contra di voi, e chio vi haveva consigliato cosi, e chio vi haveva prestato denari per far questo viaggio, la somma di sessanta scudi e due Portoghese, perche ancora voi potrete dir cosi, e io o ditto che i denari che voi m'havete portato, per che voi me li avette resi quando voi fussi tornato di francia; e cosi voi et io saremo tutti due scusati. E se voi fate altramente voi sarete causa della mia ruuina, e penso che voi non mi vorreste vedere in ruuina. Per l'amor di dio fate come s'io fussi vostro figliuolo, e vi prego per l'amor di dio e della buona amisia che voi m'havete portata et io a voi, di dire come io vi mando, coe di fare questo viaggio per ritirare i vostri denari e per lassar passar la collera a la Regina, e la sospittio che ella haveva

## Seigneur Davie

di voi, e che i denari che io o ditto che voi m'havete pigliato, che voi l'havete pigliati per paura che nonvene mancasse per fare il vostro viaggio, e che voi me li haveste resi quando voi fussi tornato, e che non bisognava che io v'havessi fatto un tal brutto, (sic), e che voi sete homo da bene, e che non li vorreste haver pigliati, senza rendermeli, a causa che io ero tanto vostro compagno, voi non havette mai pensato che io ne havessi fatto un tal brutto. Et vi prego di non volere esser causa della mia ruina, e se voi dite cosi come vi mando sarete scusato, e io ancora.

La Regina vi manda ci pigliare, per parlar; con voi pigliate guardia a voi, che voi la conoscete, pigliate guardia che non v'abbuzi delle sue parole, come voi sapete bene; e m'ha detto che vuol parlare a voi in segreto, e pigliate guardia delli dire come vi ho scritto, e non altramente, a fin che nostra parola, si confronti l'una e l'altra, e ne voi ne io non saremo in pena nessuna, e vi prego di fare quanto v'ho scritto e non altramente. Fatemi intendere innanzi che voi siete qui, la vostra volontà, et vi prego de



## Sketch Life of David Riccio

haver pieta di me e non voler esser causa della mia morte, e facendo come io vi mando non sarete niente in pena ne io ancora, e io vene saro sempre obligato, e troverete chio lo conoscerò d'una maniera, che voi vene contenterete di me e vi prego di mi volere scrivere quello che voi volete dire, a fin che io non sia piu in questa pena che io sono innanzi che voi arivate qui, per homo espress.

Altra cosa non vo da scrivere per adesso, perche velo diro quando sarete qui, e vi prego di haver pieta di me, e di voi, perche se voi dite altramente di quel che io v'ho scritto, sarete in pena si ben come me.

Pregando dio che vi dia contentezza di edlilemburgh questa domenica.

V<sup>ro</sup> come buon fratello.

JOSEPH RICCIO.

Vi prego di brugiar la littera appresso che voi l'havete letta.<sup>1</sup>

Tytler further comments on this (p. 61):

<sup>1</sup> State Paper Office. The letter is thus endorsed in Cecil's hand, "Joseph Riccio, the Queen of Scots' servant" (Fraser Tytler, vii. pp. 367-8).

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“When it is considered that at this moment Bothwell, Lethington, and their accomplices, had resolved on the King’s death ; . . . when they had hinted their intentions to the Queen, and had been commanded by her to do nothing that would touch her honour ; when we know that Bothwell, who was at this time in the highest favour with Mary, was the custodiar also of the written bond for the murder of Darnley, there appears to me a presumption that Joseph Riccio, who must have hated the King as the principal assassin of his brother, had joined the plot ; that his terrors arose out of his having revealed to Lutyni the conspiracy for Darnley’s murder, and that the Queen, suspecting it, had resolved to secure his person.” This she did not do, for Drury interrogating him found he thought that if he was returned to

## Sketch Life of David Riccio

Scotland he was certain of a "prepared death" (Drury to Cecil, 7th February 1566) received orders from Cecil not to send him back but to detain him.

Darnley was murdered — blown up, strangled, or both—at Kirk o' Field, 10th February 1566-7. Very soon after the murder placards denounced those concerned in the slaughter. The first placard named the Earl of Bothwell, Mr James Balfour and "black Mr John Spens." In the second four strangers, "Signor Francis, Bastian, John de Bordeaux, and Joseph, David's brother."

We know nothing more of Joseph Riccio except that in the Roll of Queen Mary's household signed by him, 1566-7 (his signature is reproduced in Teulet's *Papiers d'Etat*) there is an entry, "René Bonneau, frère du-dict Joseph." Dr Joseph Robertson boldly identifies this

## Seigneur Davie

name with the priest René Benoist who accompanied the Queen to Scotland and challenged John Knox to controversy in 1561. He was afterwards confessor to Henry IV., as he had assisted in his conversion. It may be so, and "frère" may mean "brother-in-law," but in 1566 Joseph Riccio is said to have been only eighteen.

At this critical time Lutyni was sent back by Drury to Scotland. It was only a week after Darnley's death, and the Queen did not see him, but gave his examination to Bothwell—an odd judge. He seemed satisfied with what Lutyni said, and the Italian again proceeded south, but with a present from the Queen of thirty crowns, and very happy at his escape.

## APPENDIX IV

PRINTED in Percy's *Reliques*, with changes, 1765, ii. 195, "The Murder of the King of Scots"; with some restorations of the original readings, 1794, ii. 200.

### EARL BOTHWELL

F. L. Child's *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, iii. 174.

1. Woe worth thee, woe worth thee false  
    Scottlande !  
Ffor 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 Scotland within,  
And she wold marry him and crowne  
    him King.

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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 may 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. Ffor if the King had risen forth of his  
place,  
He wold haue sitt him downe in the  
chare,  
And tho itt beseemed him not soe well,  
Altho the King had been present there.
6. Some lords in Scotland waxed wonderous  
wroth,  
And quarrelld with him for the nonce ;  
I shall you tell how it 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 wold not come in one  
sheete.

## Sketch Life of David Riccio

8. Then some of the lords of Scotland  
waxed wrothe,  
And made their vow vehementlye,  
“ For death of the queenes chamberlaine  
The King himselfe he shall dye.”
9. They strowed his chamber ouer with  
gunpowder,  
And layd greene rushes in his way ;  
Ffor 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 was noe sooner caste on sleepe,  
But his chamber was on blasing fyer.
11. Vp he lope, and a glasse window broke,  
He had thirty foote for to fall ;  
Lord Bodwell kept a privy wach  
Vnderneath his castle-wall.  
“ Who haue wee heere ? ” sayd Lord  
Bodwell ;  
“ Answer me, now I doe call.”
12. “ King Henery the Eighth my vnkle was ;  
Some pittie show for his sweet sake !  
Ah Lord Bodwell, I know thee well ;  
Some pittie on me I pray thee take ! ”

## Seigneur Davie

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 chamber-  
laine  
That day thou deemedst him to dye."
14. Through halls and towers this King they  
ledd,  
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 Scottland he  
heard tell  
That the worthy King he was slaine,  
He hath banished the queene soe  
bitterlye  
That in Scottland shee dare not remaine.
16. But shee is fled into merry England,  
And Scotland to a side hath laine.  
And through the Queene of Englands  
good grace  
Now in England shee doth remaine.

The following entry in the Stationers'  
Register may refer to this ballad: " 24  
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## Sketch Life of David Riccio

March, 1579, Thomas Gosson. Received of him for a ballad concerninge the murder of the late Kinge of Scottes ” (Arber, ii. 349).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Child, Vol. v. 247.



## APPENDIX V

### THE LAST SURVIVORS

SIR EDWARD HOBY wrote to Lord Burghley, 10th November 1584: "Andrew Car of Fawden who married a sister of the Earl of Arren is likewise imprisoned at Erdennest, Lord Lindsay, now in ward with the Earl of Crawford, are the two last livin of the murderers of David. This is he whom the Scottish Queen was wont to say that she felt his cold dagger pass by her cheeks" (Marquis of Salisbury's MSS. at Hatfield, *Hist. MS. Comm. Reports*).



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