

CHAPTER XV

THE DEVIL AT COURT

It was half-past two of the clock when Cicely, who carried her boy in her arms, accompanied by Emlyn, Thomas Bolle and Jacob Smith, found herself in the great courtyard of the Palace of Whitehall. The place was full of people waiting there upon one business or another, through whom messengers and armed men thrust their way continually, crying, "Way! In the King's name, way!" So great was the press, indeed, that for some time even Jacob could command no attention, till at length he caught sight of the herald who had visited his house in the morning, and beckoned to him.

"I was looking for you, Master Smith, and for the Lady Harflete," the man said, bowing to her. "You have an appointment with his Grace, have you not? but God knows if it can be kept. The ante-chambers are full of folk bringing news about the rebellion in the north, and of great lords and councillors who wait for commands or money, most of them for money. In short the King has given order that all appointments are cancelled; he can see no one to-day. The Lord Cromwell told me so himself."

Jacob took a golden angel from his pouch and began to play with it between his fingers.

"I understand, noble herald," he said. "Still, do you think that you

could find me a messenger to the Lord Cromwell? If so, this trifle----"

"I'll try, Master Smith," he answered, stretching out his hand for the piece of money. "But what is the message?"

"Oh, say that Pink Pearl would learn from his Lordship where he can lay hands upon £1000 without interest."

"A strange message, to which I will hazard an answer--nowhere," said the herald, "yet I'll find some one to deliver it. Step within this archway and wait out of the rain. Fear not, I will be back presently."

They did as he bid them, gladly enough, for it had begun to drizzle and Cicely was afraid lest her boy, with whom London did not agree too well, should take cold. Here, then, they stood amusing themselves in watching the motley throng that came and went. Bolle, to whom the scene was strange, gaped at them with his mouth open; Emlyn took note of every one with her quick eyes, while old Jacob Smith whispered tales concerning individuals as they passed, most of which were little to their credit.

As for Cicely, soon her thoughts were far away. She knew that she was at a crisis of her fortune; that if things went well with her this day she might look to be avenged upon her enemies, and to spend the rest of her life in wealth and honour. But it was not of such matters that she dreamed, whose heart was set on Christopher, without whom naught availed. Where was he, she wondered. If Jacob's tale were true, after

passing many dangers, but a little while ago he lived and had his health. Yet in those times death came quickly, leaping like the lightning from unexpected clouds or even out of a clear sky, and who could say? Besides, he believed her gone, and that being so would be careless of himself, or perchance, worst thought of all, would take some other wife, as was but right and natural. Oh! then indeed----

At this moment a sound of altercation woke her to the world again, and she looked up to see that Thomas Bolle was bringing trouble on them. A coarse fat lout with a fiery and a knotted nose, being somewhat in liquor, had amused himself by making mock of his country looks and red hair, and asking whether they used him for a scarecrow in his native fields.

Thomas bore it for a while, only answering with another question: whether he, the fat fellow, hired out his nose to London housewives to light their fires. The man, feeling that the laugh was against him, and noticing the child in Cicely's arms pointed it out to his friends, inquiring whether they did not think it was exactly like its dad. Then Thomas's rage burnt up, although the jest was silly and aimless enough.

"You low, London gutter-hound!" he exclaimed; "I'll learn you to insult the Lady Harflete with your ribald japes," and stretching out his big fist he seized his enemy's purple nose in a grip of iron and began to twist it till the sot roared with pain. Thereon guards ran up and would have arrested Bolle for breaking the peace in the King's palace. Indeed,

arrested he must have been, notwithstanding all Jacob Smith could do to save him, had not at that moment a man appeared at whose coming the crowd that had gathered, separated, bowing; a man of middle age with a quick, clever face, who wore rich clothes and a fur-trimmed velvet cap and gown.

Cicely knew him at once for Cromwell, the greatest man in England after the King, and marked him well, knowing that he held her fate and that of her child in the hollow of his hand. She noted the thin-lipped mouth, small as a woman's, the sharp nose, the little brownish eyes set close together and surrounded by wrinkled skin that gave them a cunning look, and noting was afraid. Before her stood a man who, though at present he seemed to be her friend, if he chanced to become her enemy, as once he had been bribed to be her father's, would show her no more pity than the spider shows a fly.

Indeed she was right, for many were the flies that had been snared and sucked in the web of Cromwell, who, in his full tide of power and pomp, forgot the fate of his master, Wolsey, in his day a greater spider still.

"What passes here?" Cromwell said in a sharp voice. "Men, is this the place to brawl beneath his Grace's very windows? Ah! Master Smith, is it you? Explain."

"My Lord," answered Jacob, bowing, "this is Lady Harflete's servant

and he is not to blame. That fat knave insulted her and, being quick-tempered, her man, Bolle, wrang his nose."

"I see that he wrang it. Look, he is wringing it still. Friend Bolle, leave go, or presently you will have in your hand that which is of no value to you. Guard, take this beer-tub and hold his head beneath the pump for five minutes by the clock to wash him, and if he comes back again set him in the stocks. Nay, no words, fellow, you are well served. Master Smith, follow me with your party."

Again the crowd parted as they walked after Cromwell to a side door that was near at hand, to find themselves alone with him in a small chamber. Here he stopped and, turning, surveyed them all narrowly, especially Cicely.

"I suppose, Master Smith," he said, pointing to Bolle, who was wiping his hands clean with the rushes from the floor, "this is the man that you told me played the devil yonder at Blossholme. Well, he can play the fool also. In another minute there would have been a tumult and you would have lost your chance of seeing his Grace, for months perhaps, since he has determined to ride from London to-morrow morning northwards, though it is true he may change his mind ere then. This rebellion troubles him much, and were it not for the loan you promise, when loans are needed, small hope would you have had of audience. Now come quickly and be careful that you do not cross the King's temper, for it is tetchy to-day. Indeed, had it not been for the Queen, who is with

him and minded to see this Lady Harflete, that they would have burnt as a witch, you must have waited till a more convenient season which may never come. Stay, what is in that great sack you carry, Bolle?"

"The devil's livery, may it please your Lordship."

"The devil's livery, many wear that in London. Still, bring the gear, it may make his Grace laugh, and if so I'll give you a gold piece, who have had enough of oaths and scoldings, aye," he added, with a sour grin, "and of blows too. Now follow me into the Presence, and speak only when you are spoken to, nor dare to answer if he rates you."

They went from the room down a passage and through another door, where the guards on duty looked suspiciously at Bolle and his sack, but at a word from Cromwell let them through into a large room in which a fire burned upon the hearth. At the end of this room stood a huge, proud-looking man with a flat and cruel face, broad as an ox's skull, as Thomas Bolle said afterwards, who was dressed in some rich, sombre stuff and wore a velvet cap upon his head. He held a parchment in his hand, and before him on the other side of an oak table sat an officer of state in a black robe, who wrote upon another parchment, whereof there were many scattered about on the table and the floor.

"Knave," shouted the King, for they guessed that it was he, "you have cast up these figures wrong. Oh, that it should be my lot to be served by none but fools!"

"Pardon, your Grace," said the secretary in a trembling voice, "thrice have I checked them."

"Would you gainsay me, you lying lawyer," bellowed the King again. "I tell you they must be wrong, since otherwise the sum is short by £1100 of that which I was promised. Where are the £1100? You must have stolen them, thief."

"I steal, oh, your Grace, I steal!"

"Aye, why not, since your betters do. Only you are clumsy, you lack skill. Ask my Lord Cromwell there to give you lessons. He learned under the best of masters, and is a merchant by trade to boot. Oh, get you gone and take your scribblings with you."

The poor officer hastened to avail himself of this invitation. Hurriedly collecting his parchments he bowed himself from the presence of his irate Sovereign. At the door, about twelve feet away, however, he turned.

"My gracious Liege," he began, "the casting of the count is right. Upon my honour as a Christian soul I can look your Majesty in the face with truth in my eye----"

Now on the table there was a massive inkstand made from the horn of a

ram mounted with silver feet. This Henry seized and hurled with all his strength. The aim was good, for the heavy horn struck the wretched scribe upon the nose so that the ink squirted all over his face, and felled him to the floor.

"Now there is more in your eye than truth," shouted the King. "Be off, ere the stool follows the inkpot."

Two ladies who stood by the fire talking together and taking no heed, for to such rude scenes they seemed to be accustomed, looked up and laughed a little, then went on talking, while Cromwell smiled and shrugged his shoulders. Then in the midst of the silence which followed Thomas Bolle, who had been watching open-mouthed, ejaculated in his great voice--

"A bull's eye! A noble bull! Myself cannot throw straighter."

"Silence, fool," hissed Emlyn.

"Who spoke?" asked the king, looking towards them sharply.

"Please, my Liege, it was I, Thomas Bolle."

"Thomas Bolle! Can you sling a stone, Thomas Bolle, whoever you may be?"

"Aye, Sire, but not better than you, I think. That was a gallant shot."

"Thomas Bolle, you are right. Seeing the hurry and the unhandiness of the missile, it was excellent. Let the knave stand up again and I'll bet you a gold noble to a brass nail that you'll not do as well within an inch. Why, the fellow's gone! Will you try on my Lord Cromwell? Nay, this is no time for fooling. What's your business, Thomas Bolle, and who are those women with you?"

Now Cromwell stepped forward, and with cringing gestures began to explain something to the King in a low voice. Meanwhile, the two ladies became suddenly interested in Cicely, and one of them, a pale but pretty woman, splendidly dressed, stepped forward to her, saying--

"Are you the Lady Harflete of whom we have heard, she who was to have been burnt as a witch? Yes? And is that your child? Oh! what a beautiful child. A boy, I'll swear. Come to me, sweet, and in after years you can tell that a queen has nursed you," and she stretched out her arms.

As good fortune would have it the child was awake, and attracted by the Queen's pleasant voice, or perhaps by the necklace of bright gems that she wore, he held out his little hands towards her and went quite contentedly to her breast. Jane Seymour, for it was she, began to fondle him with delight, then, followed by her lady, ran to the King, saying--

"See, Harry, see what a beautiful boy, and how he loves me. God send us such a son as this!"

The King glanced at the child, then answered--

"Aye, he would do well enow. Well, it rests with you, Jane. Nurse him, nurse him, perhaps the sex is catching. I and all England would see you brought to bed of that sickness, Sweet. What said you, Cromwell?"

The great minister went on with his explanations, till the King, wearying of him, called out--

"Come here, Master Smith."

Jacob advanced, bowing, and stood still.

"Now, Master Smith, the Lord Cromwell tells me that if I sign these papers, you, on behalf of the Lady Harflete, will loan me £1000 without interest, which as it chances I need. Where, then, is this £1000?--for I will have no promises, not even from you, who are known to keep them, Master Smith."

Jacob thrust his hand beneath his robe, and from various inner pockets drew out bags of gold, which he set in a row upon the table.

"Here they are, your Grace," he said quietly. "If you should wish for them they can be weighed and counted."

"God's truth! I think I had better keep them, lest some accident should happen to you on the way home, Master Smith. You might fall into the Thames and sink."

"Your Grace is right, the parchments will be lighter to carry, even," he added meaningly, "with your Highness's name added."

"I can't sign," said the King doubtfully, "all the ink is spilt."

Jacob produced a small ink-horn, which like most merchants of the day he carried hung to his girdle, drew out the stopper and with a bow set it on the table.

"In truth you are a good man of business, Master Smith, too good for a mere king. Such readiness makes me pause. Perhaps we had better meet again at a more leisured season."

Jacob bowed once more, and stretching out his hand slowly lifted the first of the bags of gold as though to replace it in his pocket.

"Cromwell, come hither," said the King, whereon Jacob, as though in forgetfulness, laid the bag back upon the table.

"Repeat the heads of this matter, Cromwell."

"My Liege, the Lady Harflete seeks justice on the Spaniard Maldon,

Abbot of Blossholme, who is said to have murdered her father, Sir John Foterell, and her husband, Sir Christopher Harflete, though rumour has it that the latter escaped his clutches and is now in Spain. Item: the said Abbot has seized the lands which this Dame Cicely should have inherited from her father, and demands their restitution."

"By God's wounds! justice she shall have and for nothing if we can give it her," answered the King, letting his heavy fist fall upon the table.

"No need to waste time in setting out her wrongs. Why, 'tis the same Spanish knave Maldon who stirs up all this hell's broth in the north. Well, he shall boil in his own pot, for against him our score is long. What more?"

"A declaration, Sire, of the validity of the marriage between Christopher Harflete and Cicely Foterell, which without doubt is good and lawful although the Abbot disputes it for his own ends; and an indemnity for the deaths of certain men who fell when the said Abbot attacked and burnt the house of the said Christopher Harflete."

"It should have been granted the more readily if Maldon had fallen also, but let that pass. What more?"

"The promise, your Grace, of the lands of the Abbey of Blossholme and of the Priory of Blossholme in consideration of the loan of £1000 advanced to your Grace by the agent of Cicely Harflete, Jacob Smith."

"A large demand, my Lord. Have these lands been valued?"

"Aye, Sire, by your Commissioner, who reports it doubtful if with all their tenements and timber they would fetch £1000 in gold."

"Our Commissioner? A fig for his valuing, doubtless he has been bribed. Still, if we repay the money we can hold the land, and since this Dame Harflete and her husband have suffered sorely at the hands of Maldon and his armed ruffians, why, let it pass also. Now, is that all? I weary of so much talk."

"But one thing more, your Grace," put in Cromwell hastily, for Henry was already rising from his chair. "Dame Cicely Harflete, her servant, Emlyn Stower, and a certain crazed old nun were condemned of sorcery by a Court Ecclesiastic whereof the Abbot Maldon was a member, the said Abbot alleging that they had bewitched him and his goods."

"Then he was pleader and judge in one?"

"That is so, your Grace. Already without the royal warrant they were bound to the stake for burning, the said Maldon having usurped the prerogative of the Crown, when your Commissioner, Legh, arrived and loosed them, but not without fighting, for certain men were killed and wounded. Now they humbly crave your Majesty's royal pardon for their share in this man-slaying, if any, as also does Thomas Bolle yonder, who seems to have done the slaying----"

"Well can I believe it," muttered the King.

"And a declaration of the invalidity of their trial and condemning, and of their innocence of the foul charge laid against them."

"Innocence!" exclaimed Henry, growing impatient and fixing on the last point. "How do we know they were innocent, though it is true that if Dame Harflete is a witch she is the prettiest that ever we have heard of or seen. You ask too much, after your fashion, Cromwell."

"I crave your Grace's patience for one short minute. There is a man here who can prove that they were innocent; yonder red-haired Bolle."

"What? He who praised our shooting? Well, Bolle, since you are so good a sportsman, we will listen to you. Prove and be brief."

"Now all is finished," murmured Emlyn to Cicely, "for assuredly fool Thomas will land us in the mire."

"Your Grace," said Bolle in his big voice, "I obey in four words--I was the devil."

"The devil you were, Thomas Bolle. Now, your meaning?"

"Your Grace, Blossholme was haunted, I haunted it."

"How could you do otherwise if you lived there?"

"I'll show your Grace," and without more ado, to the horror of Cicely, Thomas tumbled from his sack all his hellish garb and set to work to clothe himself. In a minute, for he was practised at the game, the hideous mask was on his head, and with it the horns and skin of the widow's billy-goat; the tail and painted hides were tied about him, and in his hand he waved the eel spear, short-handled now. Thus arrayed he capered before the astonished King and Queen, shaking the tail that had a wire in it and clattering his hoofs upon the floor.

"Oh, good devil! Most excellent devil!" exclaimed his Majesty, clapping his hands. "If I had met thee I'd have run like a hare. Stay, Jane, peep you through yonder door and tell me who are gathered there."

The Queen obeyed and, returned, said--

"There be a bishop and a priest, I cannot see which, for it grows dark, with chaplains and sundry of the lords of Council waiting audience."

"Good. Then we'll try the devil on these devil-tamers. Friend Satan, go you to that door, slip through it softly and rush upon them roaring, driving them through this chamber so that we may see which of them will be bold enough to try to lay you. Dost understand, Beelzebub?"

Thomas nodded his horns and departed silently as a cat.

"Now open the door and stand on one side," said the King.

Cromwell obeyed, nor had they long to wait. Presently from the hall beyond there rose a most fearful clamour. Then through the door shot the bishop panting, after him came lords, chaplains, and secretaries, and last of all the priest, who, being very fat and hampered by his gown, could not run so fast, although at his back Satan leapt and bellowed. No heed did they take of the King's Majesty or of aught else, whose only thought was flight as they tore down the chamber to the farther door.

"Oh, noble, noble!" hallooed the King, who was shaking with laughter. "Give him your fork, devil, give him your fork," and having the royal command Bolle obeyed with zeal.

In thirty seconds it was all over; the rout had come and gone, only Thomas in his hideous attire stood bowing before the King, who exclaimed--

"I thank thee, Thomas Bolle, thou hast made me laugh as I have not laughed for years. Little wonder that thy mistress was condemned for witchcraft. Now," he added, changing his tone, "off with that mummery, and, Cromwell, go, catch one of those fools and tell them the truth ere tales fly round the palace. Jane, cease from merriment, there is a time for all things. Come hither, Lady Harflete, I would speak with you."

Cicely approached and curtsied, leaving her boy in the Queen's arms, where he had gone to sleep, for she did not seem minded to part with him.

"You are asking much of us," he said suddenly, searching her with a shrewd glance, "relying, doubtless, on your wrongs, which are deep, or your face, which is sweet, or both. Well, these things move Kings mayhap more than others, also I knew old Sir John, your father, a loyal man and a brave, he fought well at Flodden; and young Harflete, your husband, if he still lives, had a good name like his forebears. Moreover your enemy, Maldon, is ours, a treacherous foreign snake such as England hates, for he would set her beneath the heel of Spain.

"Now, Dame Harflete, doubtless when you go hence you will bear away strange stories of King Harry and his doings. You will say he plays the fool, pelting his servants with inkpots when he is wrath, as God knows he has often cause to be, and scaring his bishops with sham Satans, as after all why should he not since it is a dull world? You'll say, too, that he takes his teaching from his ministers, and signs what these lay before him with small search as to the truth or falsity. Well, that's the lot of monarchs who have but one man's brain and one man's time; who needs must trust their slaves until these become their masters, and there is naught left," here his face grew fierce, "save to kill them, and find more and worse. New servants, new wives," and he glanced at Jane, who was not listening, "new friends, false, false, all three of

them, new foes, and at the last old Death to round it off. Such has been the lot of kings from David down, and such I think it shall always be."

He paused a while, brooding heavily, then looked up and went on, "I know not why I should speak thus to a chit like you, except it be, that young though you are, you also have known trouble and the feel of a sick heart. Well, well, I have heard more of you and your affairs than you might think, and I forget nothing--that's my gift. Dame Harflete, you are richer than you have been advised to say, and I repeat you ask much of me. Justice is your due from your Sovereign, and you shall have it; but these wide Abbey lands, this Priory of Blossholme, whose nuns have befriended you and whom you desire to save, this embracing pardon for others who had shed blood, this cancelling outside of the form of law of a sentence passed by a Court duly constituted, if unjust, all in return for a loan of a pitiful £1000? You huckster well, Lady Harflete, one would think that your father had been a chapman, not rough John Foterell, you who can drive so shrewd a bargain with your King's necessities."

"Sire, Sire," broke in Cicely in confusion, "I have no more, my lands are wasted by Abbot Maldon, my husband's hall is burnt by his soldiers, my first year's rents, if ever I should receive them, are promised----"

"To whom?"

She hesitated.

"To whom?" he thundered. "Answer, Madam."

"To your Royal Commissioner, Dr. Legh."

"Ah! I thought as much, though when he spoke of you he did not tell it, the snuffling rogue."

"The jewels that came to me from my mother are in pawn for that £1000, and I have no more."

"A palpable lie, Dame Harflete, for if so, how have you paid Cromwell? He did not bring you here for nothing."

"Oh, my Liege, my Liege," said Cicely, sinking to her knees, "ask not a helpless woman to betray those who have befriended her in her most sore and honest need. I said I have nothing, unless those gems are worth more than I know."

"And I believe you, Dame Harflete. We have plucked you bare between us, have we not? Still, perchance, you will be no loser in the end. Now, Master Smith, there, does not work for love alone."

"Sire," said Jacob, "that is true, I copy my masters. I have this lady's jewels in pledge, and I hope to make a profit on them. Still, Sire, there is among them a pink pearl of great beauty that it might please

the Queen to wear. Here it is," and he laid it upon the table.

"Oh, what a lovely thing," said Jane; "never have I seen its like."

"Then study it well, Wife, for you look your last upon it. When we cannot pay our soldiers to keep our crown upon our head, and preserve the liberties of England against the Spaniard and the Pope of Rome, it is no time to give you gems that I have not bought. Take that gaud and sell it, Master Smith, for whatever it will fetch among the Jews, and add the price to the £1000, lessened by one tenth for your trouble. Now, Dame Harflete, you have bought the favour of your King, for whoever else may, I'll not lie. Ah! here comes Cromwell. My Lord, you have been long."

"Your Grace, yonder priest is in a fit from fright, and thinks himself in hell. I had to tarry with him till the doctor came."

"Doubtless he'll get better now that you are gone. Poor man, if a sham devil frights him so, what will he do at last? Now, Cromwell, I have made examination of this business and I will sign your papers, all of them. Dame Harflete here tells me how hard you have worked for her, all for nothing, Cromwell, and that pleases me, who at times have wondered how you grew so rich, as your learner, Wolsey, did before you. He took bribes, Cromwell!"

"My Liege," he answered in a low voice, "this case was cruel, it moved

my pity----"

"As it has ours, leaving us the richer by £1000 and the price of a pearl. There, five, are they all signed? Take them, Master Smith, as the Lady Harflete is your client, and study them to-night. If aught be wrong or omitted, you have our royal word that we will set it straight. This is our command--note it, Cromwell--that all things be done quickly as occasion shall arise to give effect to these precepts, pardons and patents which you, Cromwell, shall countersign ere they leave this room. Also, that no further fee, secret or declared, shall be taken from the Lady Harflete, whom henceforth, in token of our special favour, we create and name the Lady of Blossholme, from her husband or her child, as to any of these matters, and that Commissioner Legh, on receipt thereof, shall pay into our treasury any sum or sums that Dame Harflete may have promised to him. Write it down, my Lord Cromwell, and see that our words are carried out, lest it be the worse for you."

The Vicar-General hastened to obey, for there was something in the King's eye that frightened him. Meanwhile the Queen, after she had seen the coveted pearl disappear into Jacob's pocket, thrust back the child into Cicely's arms, and without any word of adieu or reverence to the King, followed by her lady, departed from the room, slamming the door behind her.

"Her Grace is cross because that gem--your gem, Lady Harflete--was refused to her," said Henry, then added in an angry growl, "'Fore God!

does she dare to play off her tempers upon me, and so soon, when I am troubled about big matters? Oho! Jane Seymour is the Queen to-day, and she'd let the world know it. Well, what makes a queen? A king's fancy and a crown of gold, which the hand that set it on can take off again, head and all, if it stick too tight. And then where's your queen? Pest upon women and the whims that make us seek their company! Dame Harflete, you'd not treat your lord so, would you? You have never been to Court, I think, or I should have known your eyes again. Well, perhaps it is well for you, and that's why you are gentle and loving."

"If I am gentle, Sire, it is trouble that has gentled me, who have suffered so much, and know not even now whether after one week of marriage I am wife or widow."

"Widow? Should that be so, come to me and I will find you another and a nobler spouse. With your face and possessions it will not be difficult. Nay, do not weep, for your sake I trust that this lucky man may live to comfort you and serve his King. At least he'll be no Spaniard's tool and Pope's plotter."

"Well will he serve your Grace if God gives him the chance, as my murdered father did."

"We know it, Lady. Cromwell, will you never have finished with those writings? The Council waits us, and so does supper, and a word or two with her Grace ere bedtime. You, Thomas Bolle, you are no fool and can

hold a sword; tell me, shall I go up north to fight the rebels, or bide here and let others do it?"

"Bide here, your Grace," answered Thomas promptly. "'Twixt Wash and Humber is a wild land in winter and arrows fly about there like ducks at night, none knowing whence they come. Also your Grace is over-heavy for a horse on forest roads and moorland, and if aught should chance, why, they'd laugh in Spain and Rome, or nearer, and who would rule England with a girl child on its throne?" and he stared hard at Cromwell's back.

"Truth at last, and out of the lips of a red-haired bumpkin," muttered the King, also staring at the unconscious Cromwell, who was engaged on his writing and either feigned deafness or did not hear. "Thomas Bolle, I said that you were no fool, although some may have thought you so, is there aught you would have in payment for your counsel--save money, for that we have none?"

"Aye, Sire, freedom from my oath as a lay-brother of the Abbey of Blossholme, and leave to marry."

"To marry whom?"

"Her, Sire," and he pointed to Emlyn.

"What! The other handsome witch? See you not that she has a temper? Nay, woman, be silent, it is written in your face. Well, take your freedom

and her with it, but, Thomas Bolle, why did you not ask otherwise when the chance came your way? I thought better of you. Like the rest of us, you are but a fool after all. Farewell to you, Fool Thomas, and to you also, my fair Lady of Blossholme."