

GOTHIC BOURNES

**THE
STORY OF
*RAYMOND CASTLE***

by Mr. BACON

(1800)

TRANSCRIPTION BY

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Nº 2

Gothic Stories.

SIR BERTRAND'S
ADVENTURES IN A RUINOUS CASTLE:

*THE STORY OF
FITZALAN:*

THE ADVENTURE
JAMES III. OF SCOTLAND
HAD WITH THE
WEIRD SISTERS,
IN THE DREADFUL
WOOD OF BIRNAN:

*THE STORY OF
RAYMOND CASTLE:*

THE
RUIN OF THE HOUSE OF ALBERT:
AND
MARY, A FRAGMENT.

Third Edition, with Additions.

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(Pages 28-42)

[28] On the borders of Scotland, in an obscure glen, surrounded by a deep and almost impassable moat, formerly stood the castle of the baron Raymond; once the favourite residence of that noble family. The existing baron had retired from this seat of his progenitors, about [29] twenty years, to a newly erected mansion, some thirty miles distant, on a report which was risen among his domestics, that the image of the late lord was frequently seen in an apartment on the west side of the castle. This opinion of the castle being haunted was readily adopted by the surrounding peasantry; and no one, after the close of day, dared venture within sight of it.

At this period, a war between England and Scotland raged with incredible fury; and the youth of each nation were invited to join the standard of their respective sovereigns. The baron Raymond exerted his interest among his tenantry and vassals, in favour of king David; but such were the devastations of the Scottish monarch, and his marauding army, that many of his subjects joined the forces of the victorious Edward.

Among the numerous clans and individuals that fled from Scotland, was a youth of majestic mien and manly form, the son of a vassal of the house of Raymond; who having from his infancy discovered a propensity for war, had engaged the notice of the baron, and with his son, two years younger, had been instructed in the use of arms. Glanville (for such was the name of the young peasant) suspecting that his lordship would command his attendance upon lord Edward, then on the point of setting out to join the forces of his sovereign, privately stole away from the village, intent to follow the banners of the British monarch.

Having continued his walk the whole day, he reached the skirts of a gloomy forest, that sheltered from the rude blasts of the north the castle of Raymond. He stood a few minutes, and gazed on the scene around, in hopes of discovering some cot, or shepherd's hovel, where he might pass the night. No one appearing, he struck into the forest, and, after half an hour's walk, arrived at the opposite side; the sun had now sunk beneath the horizon; and its last reflections, which pointed upon the lofty battlements, discovered to him the abandoned castle. He was an utter stranger to this part of the country, and, consequently, knew not that the [30] house to which he was hastening was uninhabited, or that it was denominated the Haunted Castle. His nearer approach discovered to him that it was untenanted; but his weary limbs required rest, and he therefore determined to

pass the night in the venerable structure. The last glimpse of day had fled the sky when Glanville reached the moat, or rather ditch (for it was entirely dry); the banks of which having fallen in, formed an easy access to the house. The building was composed of two wings, or turrets, with a spacious dome in the centre, the door of which time had mouldered into dust; so that, without resistance, the weary traveller was admitted. A rustic kind of noise succeeded the entrance of the young adventurer, and, for the first time in his life, he felt an emotion somewhat allied to fear; but his breast, the seat of innocence and virtue, soon repelled the trembling visitor, and assumed its wonted calmness.

The cautious youth, before he left his parent's house, aware that the country through which he had to pass was thinly inhabited, and bare of accommodations, had taken with him those implements by which that necessary [sic] element, fire, is raised into action; and which to a traveller, in a country void of inhabitants, is so very essential. Having, therefore, procured a light, he found himself in a spacious hall, overgrown with weeds and rushes; around the walls and ceiling, which were very lofty, the clustering ivy crept; and here the solemn bird of night enjoyed, unmolested and at ease, her solitary reign, where, sheltered from the inclemency of the sky, she built her nest and reared her young. The strange appearance of the light alarmed the moping race, who taking wing, fled from their once peaceful dwelling, and this unwelcome guest. The noise which their sudden flight occasioned, echoed through the vaulted dome, and again called forth, in the mind of the astonished Glanville, the tremors of fear, which subsided with the knowledge of the cause from whence the sounds arose. All was again silent, and the youth advanced. A flight of steps, rising from the hall, led to the western tower; [31] these Glanville ascended, and soon reached a suite of rooms, disrobed of every article of furniture. Extending his search, he reached a door, in which he discovered a key, but so covered with rust, that it indicated its refusal of executing the office for which it was designed. Its service, however, was unnecessary; for, on touching the lock, the door immediately opened, and discovered a small but neat apartment, which, from the furniture it contained, had the appearance of having once been a lady's dressing-room. On a table, placed between two gothic windows, stood a mirror, near to which lay a small casket. Glanville, resting his lamp upon the table, took it up, and placing his finger on the spring, it flew open, and presented the miniature of a youth in the habit of an officer. He approached the light to have a more perfect view of the face, and, starting a few paces back, exclaimed, "Father of Mercy! what do I see? —My very self in this counterfeit presentment!" In the

greatest astonishment he took it from the casket, and on the obverse side read the following words: “Wentworth, sixth lord Raymond.”

“From this it appears,” said he, “that the resemblance of the late lord Raymond is here preserved. I have heard the present baron did leave the castle of his ancestors on an idle report, that his immediate predecessor, after death, was often wandering among the chambers of his earthly habitation. If in this there be any sense of truth, then, it should seem, I am now inclosed within the walls of this deserted mansion. A thousand thoughts, “continued he,”[sic]¹ rush into my mind, and would be heard. I do recollect me, walking in the park one evening, to have seen the baron bending on the vacant air his disordered eye, and holding with the wind discourse: his frame shook, as if his hour of dissolution was drawing near, and, as I passed, he shrieked aloud, and fell lifeless on the ground. Often has he seized my arm and gazed with streaming eyes upon my face. Once, I well remember, repeating this, his frequent practice, he heaved a sigh, and cried, [32] ‘*Glanville! You are the very semblance of my murdered uncle.*’ The words, and the action that did accompany them, are still fresh in my memory; and, at this moment, I know not wherefore, occur with more than common force: but I am too weary for thinking, and sleep lies heavy on my eyes. Here will I rest myself this night,” said he, throwing himself upon a sofa, which stood in the room, “and to-morrow, will give these things a farther thought.”

Fatigue had so oppressed the spirits of the youthful traveller, that he soon fell into a profound sleep. His repose was undisturbed; nor did he shake his slumber off till the sun-beams darted full upon his face, through the broken lattice of his apartment. Starting from his couch, he gazed like one just wakened from a dream, suspended in doubt, till the adventures of the preceding day recurred to his memory, whether that [sic] he saw was real, or the vision of created fancy.— “If there is ought to be believed in dreams,” said he, “then those I have had to night portend some strange event. Methought, as I lay sleeping, a spectre, issuing from that door, approached the couch and gazed attentive on my face. Long it stood in mute and silent admiration. I saw the tear of sorrow trembling in its eye: the smile of hope succeeded, and, as it left the room, I rose to watch its departure, when, its eyes still bent on me, in a hollow tone of voice it cried— ‘*At the mid hour of night, fail not to meet me here!*’ —then instantly vanished from my sight. But

¹ Throughout the text double inverted commas are used correctly, but not in this case.

this," continued he, after a short pause, "is the work of mimic fancy, an idle dream, no more."

"*More!*" answered a hollow voice, from beneath.

"Heavens!" exclaimed the wondering youth; "such was the voice that I heard in my sleep!—Say, thou invisible and perturbed spirit, are those things, which in my slumber's busy memory treasured up, real, or of sportive fancy? Speak, for on thy answer depends my return to this lonely mansion."

"*At the mid hour of night, fail not to meet me here!*" answered the voice, in the same hollow tone.

"Then rest in peace," said Glanville; "for by the [33] hopes of conquest that fire a soldier's breast, I will meet thee at the appointed hour."

A hollow groan succeeded, accompanied with a loud and thundering noise, that shook the very foundation of the castle.

When the noise had ceased, Glanville falling on his knees, solicited from heaven fortitude and courage to meet the horrors of the approaching night; and then taking from the table his sword, together with the casket that contained the miniature of the late baron, he descended the same flight of steps which had conducted him to the apartment where he had passed the night; and having recrossed the moat, ascended a neighbouring hill, on the brow of which he perceived a miserable hut. The tenants of this clay-built tenement received him with hospitality, and offered him such refreshment as their hovel afforded, which, poor and humble as it was, proved very acceptable to Glanville, who had not tasted food from the time he left his father's house.

From the door of this cottage the turrets of the abandoned castle were seen just peeping above the surrounding trees; and Glanville, whose thoughts were wholly occupied in reflecting on the occurrences of the preceding evening, and in anticipating those events which the womb of futurity laboured to bring forth, anxiously questioned his hosts on the subject of the building being deserted by its owner, and left to moulder and decay. From these he learned the name of the castle, and the circumstance which had determined lord Raymond to leave it; but of the former baron they possessed not the least knowledge.

The agitation of his mind received no relief from this information; and having thanked these cottagers for the repast they had afforded him, he bade them good day, and directed his way toward the forest, in which he intended to pass the remainder of the time between the present and the hour that was to lead him to the castle.

When he had reached the thickest part of the wood, he threw himself on the grass; and drawing the miniature from his pocket, he gazed on it with the most earnest attention, and gave himself up to painful and tormenting conjecture. From this reverie he was aroused by this emphatic ejaculation— “Thank Almighty God, I have found him!” Suddenly raising his eyes, he saw before him his foster-father, who, on missing him in the village, had, at the request of his mother, pursued him. The old man, perceiving that his son looked coldly on him, eagerly inquired, with tears in his eyes, if he was not glad to see him.

“O, yes,” said Glanville, starting from his reverie, and assuming a cheerful countenance, “that I am! Never did your presence glad my sight so much as at this moment: for thou art come, my father, to clear my mind of doubts that shake my peace, and, like a poisonous canker, destroy the bud of happiness. Either my suspicions have made me the most ungrateful wretch alive, or they prove me the most injured of mankind. Speak, say, who was my father? Nay, do not shrink thus from the question; but as thou hopest for mercy hereafter, tell me who my parents were; for there have arisen circumstances which might persuade a stronger mind to think myself of higher birth than my present fortune speaks me.”

“I know not how to answer,” said the trembling Jolet (such was the peasant’s name); “yet do I well know thou art no son of mine.”

“How then did I come beneath your roof? Thou didst not surely steal me, Jolet. Thou couldst never be so cruel, to rob the doating mother of her tender charge, or tear from the anxious father’s fond embrace the pledge of conjugal felicity.”

“O, no, my son (for in affection thou art still my son), these hands were never engaged in theft. From every dishonest act I am as pure as you were when, an helpless infant, and smiling in the ruffian’s face, I snatched thee from his uplifted dagger.”

“Ha! murder! Oh, my soul sickens at the very thought! —But tell me all thou knowest of my life; by what mysterious workings of Providence thou saved [35] me from intended murder, with every circumstance that lives within thy memory.”

“The tale is very short, my son, nor has it escaped my recollection. Returning from the borders of England, where I had been with a herd of cattle, and somewhere near the spot we now rest on, I sat me down to take refreshment; and while thus employed, I saw a man with something in his arms glide among the trees. Apprehending him to be one of the numerous banditti which at that time lurked in these parts, I crept, unperceived, behind a thicket, hoping to escape his observation; but I scarce reached my hiding place when he approached, and with much gentleness laid what he held in his arms on the grass, and unfolded the mantle, which I perceived contained an infant. From the ruffian’s manner, I thought his business was to murder it; and yet he hesitated, sighed heavily, and kissed the babe, which all this time lay stretching its little limbs and smiling in his face. At length, plucking up as it were a determined resolution, he drew from his bosom a dagger, and at the moment when he had thrown remorse aside, and was prepared to strike, I rushed from my ambush—seized his uplifted arm, and snatched the weapon from his trembling hand. Without speaking, he instantly darted into the thickest part of the forest, while I raised the infant in my arms, and hastened on my journey, taking a different road than was usually travelled, to escape pursuit, and, thank God! reached my cottage in safety. Never shall I forget the transport of Cicely when I gave thee to her (for we had no children). She hugged thee to her breast with as much fondness as if thou wert indeed her own, and brought thee up, Glanville, with as much care.”

“And never, my dear father (for I will still call thee so,” said Glanville), “will I forget the debt I owe my mother and yourself.” He then related to the astonished Jolet the adventure of the preceding night, and informed him of his intention to revisit the castle after the close of day. The honest peasant, alarmed for his safety, proposed accompanying him, but Glanville [36] would by no means consent. He conducted him to the cottage at which he had himself been in the morning, and obtained leave of the good people to accommodate Jolet for the night, intending to return in the morning, and pursue his journey to the British camp, which was at a short distance from this place.

The rest of the day, though relieved by the conversation of Jolet, appeared to Glanville extremely tedious; and he hailed, with no small degree of pleasure, the arrival of the moment in which he was to return to the castle.

Though Glanville persisted in his refusal to Jolet's request of passing the night with him, he could not object to his accompanying him part of the way. This request Glanville acceded to, in order to quiet the mind of his foster-father, which appeared to suffer greater agitation than even his own. Farther than the moat, however, he would not permit him to advance. Here he took a solemn farewell of him for the night; and Jolet, with reluctance returned to the hovel, while Glanville entered the solitary castle.

His entering of this deserted mansion was marked by the same disturbance as occurred the evening before; nor had it less effect on his mind, which, notwithstanding the fortitude it had assumed, was considerably agitated. As before, he ascended the steps, and reached the same apartment in which he slept. The silence of the place, which was interrupted only by the stated cries of the bittern, and the screams of the hoodwinked bird of night, increased the palpitation of his heart. He felt unusual tremblings, and had not his limbs seemed to forget their accustomed office, he would willingly have re-trod his former steps, and fled the horrid spot. He was rivetted to the place, and, however willing, was unable to move. A few minutes reflection restored him to himself; and his mind became invigorated from the consciousness of self-rectitude. He employed the intervening time in a solemn address to the Divine Being, for strength and support in the approaching hour, that was to disclose, he believed, a [37] most important secret—a secret in which his fate was materially involved. Scarcely had he finished his pious ejaculations, and risen from his supplicating posture, when a violent gust of wind rushed through the apartment. This was succeeded by a similar noise to that he had heard in the morning.

With breathless patience he turned his eyes toward the door, and trembling, waited the spectre's approach. With slow and solemn pace it entered the room; its figure and dress exactly corresponded with the miniature; and, before it spoke, Glanville knew it was the form of the late baron.

“Dismiss thy fears, brave youth,” said the spectre, in a hollow sounding voice, “for innocence like thine has nought to dread. I come to confirm the suspicions that hang on thy mind; and to tell thee, that in this mangled form, thou beholdest the shadow of him who once was owner of this deserted mansion, the lord of Raymond's wide domains. The wretch who now holds that title, obtained it by the fell crime of murder! yes, by murder of his dearest friend; and the blow that deprived me of life and fortune, robbed thee, my boy, of a father!”

“Merciful God!” exclaimed Glanville, “then are my suspicions confirmed indeed!—But how did he effect this cruel deed?”

“My murderer was the son of my only brother; who having at an early age lost his parent, I took under my protection, and well supplied the loss he had sustained. The feuds that broke out between the neighbouring nations, and kindled up the flames of war, urged me to the hostile plain. My ungrateful nephew was my attendant, whose sanguine mind, heated by ambition, and panting to enjoy those honours which by right of birth were mine, amidst the contending shock of arms aimed an arrow at my breast. Too certain was the aim, too sure my fall. With well dissembled grief he mourned my fate, and paid to my remains a soldier’s funeral honours; yet before these obsequies were done, he dispatched a ruffian to my widowed love, [38] with commission to disclose my death, and, under that pretence, to seal his title to my fortunes, by sending her, and thee, her new-born son, to bear me company in the gloomy confines of the grave.”

“And was my mother murdered too?” interrupted the agitated and impatient Glanville.

“The sudden news of her husband’s fate spared the murderer’s intended purpose. She survived not the melancholy tidings. Thus far fortune favoured his cursed design, and thou alone remained the obstacle to stop his guilty progress. But even this difficulty his genius, fertile in mischief, surmounted. Such of the servants whom he suspected of too strong an attachment to their deceased lord, he found means to discharge; and then introducing those more friendly to his interest, he gave thee to a ruffian, with strong injunctions to destroy thy life; and, the better to conceal this wilful murder, conveyed a deceased infant to thy cradle. This part of his infernal plot succeeded to his wishes; all believed thy death was natural; but here the arm of heaven interposed, and snatched thee from the murderer’s grasp, who, disappointed in the prosecution of this horrid purpose, besmeared his hands with blood, returned to claim the promised bounty, and confirmed thy death with horrid oaths and dreadful imprecations. What follows, thou thyself art well acquainted with. Now listen, my son, to thy father’s charge. Hasten hence to join the forces of the British king, to whom the name of Raymond is well known. In the adverse army thou will meet thy father’s murderer; hunt him through every rank; he will fall beneath thy conquering sword; yet spare his hated life, till, in the presence of the royal Edward, he has confessed the crime that clogs his guilty soul. Fear not the justice of the English monarch; he will place thee in the possession of thy family’s honours and estates,

and thus appease the manes of thy departed sire. Do this, my son, as thou hopest for future happiness, and revere the memory of thy murdered friends.”

The shadow then glided from his sight, and the trembling Glanville, unsheathing his sword, and pressing it to his lips, said,—“And this I swear to do or may I never receive my birth-right! May ceaseless poverty be my lot!—disgrace and infamy my portion!”

Eager to pursue the advice which he had received, he hastened from the castle, and sought the shepherd’s hovel, where the sleepless Jolet impatiently waited his return.

The footsteps of Glanville, as he approached the hovel, were heard by the watchful Jolet, who immediately opened the door, and in a whisper asked if he was well. Glanville answered his paternal inquiry, and informed him of the necessity of his immediately joining the English forces. Jolet requested to accompany him; but Glanville, who knew the importance of his evidence in the momentous business which now occupied his attention, would not permit him to attend him to a place where, it was more than probable, he might lose the benefit of his allegations. He strictly enjoined him to re-enter the cottage, and wait till the labours of the day called its inhabitants from their pillows, that he might thank them for the shelter they had afforded him; and then to return home, keeping himself, as much as possible, from the notice of the baron and his family, if they were not set out to join the arms of David; and, above all, to conceal the route he had taken, that he had seen him, or was privy to the fate that had befallen him.

Jolet promised to obey his injunctions, and was going to question him on the occurrences of the night, and his adventure at the castle; when Glanville checked his curiosity; and telling him that a short time would unfold all he wished to be informed of, took an affectionate leave of the honest peasant, and set out in pursuit of the British camp.

A variety [sic]² of thought presented itself to the agitated mind of the young soldier, as he pursued his uncertain way. The sun had just risen above the horizon as he entered a small village, the inhabitants of which were in the greatest consternation, from the near approach [sic] of the enemy’s forces; a party of which he learned were, at that moment, attacking a guard of men who were conveying forage to the British camp. This information roused the martial armour [sic]³ of Glanville, who longed to enter the lists

² Printer’s error for “variety”.

³ The original text says “armour” but the alternative should be “ardour” since you can’t “rouse armour”.

with the combatants. A wounded soldier, who had escaped from the field, gave the melancholy tidings, that, overpowered by numbers, the English were giving way; and that the provisions must inevitably fall into the hands of the enemy—a circumstance, he observed, which would entirely disconcert the measures of the king, who commanded in person, and would oblige him to abandon the expedition he had planned. Glanville instantly mounted the wounded soldier's horse; and hastening to the scene of action, had the mortification to see the English retreating in disorder, and the enemy surrounding the convoy. The captain of the party, instead of encouraging his men to brave the charge of their enemy, gave way on the first advantage, and was galloping off at full speed, when Glanville reached the disordered troops.

“For shame, Britons,” he cried, in a firm and animated tone, “let not the cowardice of your leader damp your native courage! return to the charge, and show the presuming foe, that you dread not their numbers; but are determined to dispute the field as become [sic] the soldiers of the king you serve.”

Animated by the example of this gallant stranger, they rallied their broken forces; and, under the directions of this youth, returned to the charge. An obstinate conflict ensued; but the superior skill and bravery of Glanville and his followers at length bore down all before them, drove the enemy from the field, and conducted the convoy in safety to the camp.

Some of the party, who had fled from the field on the first appearance of a defeat, had spread through the camp the fatal tidings of the convoy's loss; so that the utmost consternation prevailed. On the safe arrival of this supply the king had built his hopes of conquest; and purposed, as soon as the soldiers were [41] recruited in strength, which had been much exhausted by forced marches, and shortness of provision, to attack the forces of the Scottish monarch, which were encamped a short distance from them.

Thus situated, thus lost to every hope, and enveloped in the horrors of despair, imagine the exultation and joy which the arrival of a courier, whom Glanville had dispatched in the moment of victory, charged with news of the convoy's safety and near approach, produced in the disconsolate and almost famished soldiery. The king himself, whom the messenger had apprized of the circumstances of the day and of the extraordinary valour of the stranger whose exertions saved the forage from falling into the hands of the enemy, went forth to meet the saviour of his people. Honours and rewards

due to such a conqueror were bestowed; and the desire which his majesty expressed of knowing the person to whom he was so much indebted, afforded the modest youth an opportunity of relating those particulars with which the reader has been made acquainted. It is needless to say, that he had the king's voice for his succession to the house of Raymond.

It was a circumstance well known, that the murderer, with his three sons, was in the camp of David; and Glanville panted for the arrival of the moment that was to lead the opposing armies into action. This impatience in a few days was gratified; and in this memorable action the fictitious baron became the prisoner of his injured cousin, who after the battle conducted him to the tent of his royal patron; and in his presence, and in that of his chiefs and nobles, charged the conquered baron with the foul crime of murder; adducing those circumstances with which, by the interference of Providence, he had been made acquainted, to support the allegation. These, however, were unnecessary; guilt and remorse were pictured in the villain's countenance, and he unequivocally confessed the crime.

The king ordered instant execution to be done upon him; but that was unnecessary; the wound he [42] had received from the sword of Glanville rendered death inevitable; and, at the request of that youth, the sentence was suspended.

The ambitious views which this imperious lord had formed, were now completely disappointed. His family, whom he sought to enrich and ennoble by the crime of murder, had all descended to the grave; the last that remained he saw fall in this battle, and was himself now hastening to that gloomy dwelling; not with the satisfaction of having passed a life of piety and virtue, but with the reproaches of a heart tainted with every vice, and where that of murder formed the chief.

Such was the end of an ambition, founded in murder. May this tale impress on the mind of the reader the important truth it is intended to convey—that what is begun in vice cannot end in peace; and that however successfully the cunning and artifice of narrow-minded mortals may plan the concealment of their crimes from their fellow men, they are still visible to the all-searching eye of PROVIDENCE!