

***The Marmion***  
***By***  
***Sir Walter Scott***

## **The Marmion by Sir Walter Scott**

### ***Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.***

*November's sky is chill and drear,  
November's leaf is red and sear:  
Late, gazing down the steepy linn,  
That hems our little garden in,  
Low in its dark and narrow glen,  
You scarce the rivulet might ken,  
So thick the tangled greenwood grew,  
So feeble trill'd the streamlet through:  
Now, murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen  
Through bush and brier, no longer green,  
An angry brook, it sweeps the glade,  
Brawls over rock and wild cascade,  
And, foaming brown with double speed,  
Hurries its waters to the Tweed.*

*No longer Autumn's glowing red  
Upon our Forest hills is shed;  
No more, beneath the evening beam,  
Fair Tweed reflects their purple gleam;  
Away hath pass'd the heather-bell*

*That bloom'd so rich on Needpath-fell;  
Sallow his brow, and russet bare  
Are now the sister-heights of Yair.  
The sheep, before the pinching heaven,  
To sheltered dale and down are driven,  
Where yet some faded herbage pines,  
And yet a watery sunbeam shines:  
In meek despondency they eye  
The withered sward and wintry sky,  
And far beneath their summer hill,  
Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's rill:  
The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold,  
And wraps him closer from the cold;  
His dogs no merry circles wheel,  
But, shivering, follow at his heel;  
A cowering glance they often cast,  
As deeper moans the gathering blast.*

*My imps, though hardy, bold, and wild,  
As best befits the mountain child,  
Feel the sad influence of the hour,  
And wail the daisy's vanish'd flower;  
Their summer gambols tell, and mourn,  
And anxious ask,-Will spring return,  
And birds and lambs again be gay,*

*And blossoms clothe the hawthorn spray?*

*Yes, prattlers, yes. The daisy's flower  
Again shall paint your summer bower;  
Again the hawthorn shall supply  
The garlands you delight to tie;  
The lambs upon the lea shall bound,  
The wild birds carol to the round,  
And while you frolic light as they,  
Too short shall seem the summer day.*

*To mute and to material things  
New life revolving summer brings;  
The genial call dead Nature hears,  
And in her glory reappears.  
But oh! my Country's wintry state  
What second spring shall renovate?  
What powerful call shall bid arise  
The buried warlike and the wise;  
The mind that thought for Britain's weal,  
The hand that grasp'd the victor steel?  
The vernal sun new life bestows  
Even on the meanest flower that blows;  
But vainly, vainly may he shine,  
Where Glory weeps o'er NELSON'S shrine:*

*And vainly pierce the solemn gloom,  
That shrouds, O PITT, thy hallow'd tomb!*

*Deep grav'd in every British heart,  
O never let those names depart!  
Say to your sons,-Lo, here his grave,  
Who victor died on Gadite wave;  
To him, as to the burning levin,  
Short, bright, resistless course was given.  
Where'er his country's foes were found,  
Was heard the fated thunder's sound,  
Till burst the bolt on yonder shore,  
Roll'd, blazed, destroyed,-and was no more.*

*Nor mourn ye less his perished worth,  
Who bade the conqueror go forth,  
And launch'd that thunderbolt of war  
On Egypt, Hafnia, Trafalgar;  
Who, born to guide such high emprise,  
For Britain's weal was early wise;  
Alas! to whom the Almighty gave,  
For Britain's sins, an early grave!  
His worth, who, in his mightiest hour,  
A bauble held the pride of power,  
Spum'd at the sordid lust of pelf,*

*And served his Albion for herself;  
Who, when the frantic crowd amain  
Strain'd at subjection's bursting rein,  
O'er their wild mood full conquest gain'd,  
The pride, he would not crush, restrain'd,  
Show'd their fierce zeal a worthier cause,  
And brought the freeman's arm, to aid the freeman's laws.*

*Had'st thou but lived, though stripp'd of power,  
A watchman on the lonely tower,  
Thy thrilling trump had roused the land,  
When fraud or danger were at hand;  
By thee, as by the beacon-light,  
Our pilots had kept course aright;  
As some proud column, though alone,  
Thy strength had propp'd the tottering throne:  
Now is the stately column broke,  
The beacon-light is quench'd in smoke,  
The trumpet's silver sound is still,  
The warder silent on the hill!*

*Oh, think, how to his latest day,  
When Death, just hovering, claim'd his prey,  
With Palinure's unalter'd mood,  
Firm at his dangerous post he stood;*

*Each call for needful rest repell'd,  
With dying hand the rudder held,  
Till, in his fall, with fateful sway,  
The steerage of the realm gave way!  
Then, while on Britain's thousand plains,  
One unpolluted church remains,  
Whose peaceful bells ne'er sent around  
The bloody tocsin's maddening sound,  
But still, upon the hallow'd day,  
Convoke the swains to praise and pray;  
While faith and civil peace are dear,  
Grace this cold marble with a tear,  
He, who preserved them, PITT, lies here!*

*Nor yet suppress the generous sigh,  
Because his rival slumbers nigh;  
Nor be thy requiescat dumb,  
Lest it be said o'er Fox's tomb.  
For talents mourn, untimely lost,  
When best employ'd, and wanted most;  
Mourn genius high, and lore profound,  
And wit that loved to play, not wound;  
And all the reasoning powers divine,  
To penetrate, resolve, combine;  
And feelings keen, and fancy's glow,-*

*They sleep with him who sleeps below:  
And, if thou mourn'st they could not save  
From error him who owns this grave,  
Be every harsher thought suppress'd,  
And sacred be the last long rest.  
Here, where the end of earthly things  
Lays heroes, patriots, bards, and kings;  
Where stiff the hand, and still the tongue,  
Of those who fought, and spoke, and sung;  
Here, where the fretted aisles prolong  
The distant notes of holy song,  
As if some angel spoke agen,  
'All peace on earth, good-will to men;'  
If ever from an English heart,  
O, here let prejudice depart,  
And, partial feeling cast aside,  
Record, that Fox a Briton died!  
When Europe crouch'd to France's yoke,  
And Austria bent, and Prussia broke,  
And the firm Russian's purpose brave,  
Was barter'd by a timorous slave,  
Even then dishonour's peace he spurn'd,  
The sullied olive-branch return'd,  
Stood for his country's glory fast,  
And nail'd her colours to the mast!*



*Heaven, to reward his firmness, gave  
A portion in this honour'd grave,  
And ne'er held marble in its trust  
Of two such wondrous men the dust.*

*With more than mortal powers endow'd,  
How high they soar'd above the crowd!  
Theirs was no common party race,  
Jostling by dark intrigue for place;  
Like fabled Gods, their mighty war  
Shook realms and nations in its jar;  
Beneath each banner proud to stand,  
Look'd up the noblest of the land,  
Till through the British world were known  
The names of PITT and Fox alone.  
Spells of such force no wizard grave  
E'er framed in dark Thessalian cave,  
Though his could drain the ocean dry,  
And force the planets from the sky.  
These spells are spent, and, spent with these,  
The wine of life is on the lees.  
Genius, and taste, and talent gone,  
For ever tomb'd beneath the stone,  
Where-taming thought to human pride!-  
The mighty chiefs sleep side by side.*

*Drop upon Fox's grave the tear,  
'Twill trickle to his rival's bier;  
O'er PITT'S the mournful requiem sound,  
And Fox's shall the notes rebound.  
The solemn echo seems to cry,-  
'Here let their discord with them die.  
Speak not for those a separate doom,  
Whom Fate made Brothers in the tomb;  
But search the land of living men,  
Where wilt thou find their like agen?'*

*Rest, ardent Spirits! till the cries  
Of dying Nature bid you rise;  
Not even your Britain's groans can pierce  
The leaden silence of your hearse;  
Then, O, how impotent and vain  
This grateful tributary strain!  
Though not unmark'd from northern clime,  
Ye heard the Border Minstrel's rhyme:  
His Gothic harp has o'er you rung;  
The Bard you deign'd to praise, your deathless names has sung.*

*Stay yet, illusion, stay a while,  
My wilder'd fancy still beguile!  
From this high theme how can I part,*

*Ere half unloaded is my heart!  
For all the tears e'er sorrow drew,  
And all the raptures fancy knew,  
And all the keener rush of blood,  
That throbs through bard in bard-like mood,  
Were here a tribute mean and low,  
Though all their mingled streams could flow-  
Woe, wonder, and sensation high,  
In one spring-tide of ecstasy!-  
It will not be-it may not last-  
The vision of enchantment's past:  
Like frostwork in the morning ray,  
The fancied fabric melts away;  
Each Gothic arch, memorial-stone,  
And long, dim, lofty aisle, are gone;  
And, lingering last, deception dear,  
The choir's high sounds die on my ear.  
Now slow return the lonely down,  
The silent pastures bleak and brown,  
The farm begirt with copsewood wild  
The gambols of each frolic child,  
Mixing their shrill cries with the tone  
Of Tweed's dark waters rushing on.*

*Prompt on unequal tasks to run,*

*Thus Nature disciplines her son:  
Meeter, she says, for me to stray,  
And waste the solitary day,  
In plucking from yon fen the reed,  
And watch it floating down the Tweed;  
Or idly list the shrilling lay,  
With which the milkmaid cheers her way,  
Marking its cadence rise and fail,  
As from the field, beneath her pail,  
She trips it down the uneven dale:  
Meeter for me, by yonder cairn,  
The ancient shepherd's tale to learn;  
Though oft he stop in rustic fear,  
Lest his old legends tire the ear  
Of one, who, in his simple mind,  
May boast of book-learn'd taste refined.*

*But thou, my friend, canst fitly tell,  
(For few have read romance so well,  
How still the legendary lay  
O'er poet's bosom holds its sway;  
How on the ancient minstrel strain  
Time lays his palsied hand in vain;  
And how our hearts at doughty deeds,  
By warriors wrought in steely weeds,*

*Still throb for fear and pity's sake;  
As when the Champion of the Lake  
Enters Morgana's fated house,  
Or in the Chapel Perilous,  
Despising spells and demons' force,  
Holds converse with the unburied corse;  
Or when, Dame Ganore's grace to move,  
(Alas, that lawless was their love!)  
He sought proud Tarquin in his den,  
And freed full sixty knights; or when,  
A sinful man, and unconfess'd,  
He took the Sangreal's holy quest,  
And, slumbering, saw the vision high,  
He might not view with waking eye.*

*The mightiest chiefs of British song  
Scorn'd not such legends to prolong:  
They gleam through Spenser's elfin dream,  
And mix in Milton's heavenly theme;  
And Dryden, in immortal strain,  
Had raised the Table Round again,  
But that a ribald King and Court  
Bade him toil on, to make them sport;  
Demanded for their niggard pay,  
Fit for their souls, a loser lay,*

*Licentious satire, song, and play;  
The world defrauded of the high design,  
Profaned the God-given strength, and marr'd the lofty line.*

*Warm'd by such names, well may we then,  
Though dwindled sons of little men,  
Essay to break a feeble lance  
In the fair fields of old romance;  
Or seek the moated castle's cell,  
Where long through talisman and spell,  
While tyrants ruled, and damsels wept,  
Thy Genius, Chivalry, hath slept:  
There sound the harplings of the North,  
Till he awake and sally forth,  
On venturous quest to prick again,  
In all his arms, with all his train,  
Shield, lance, and brand, and plume, and scarf,  
Fay, giant, dragon, squire, and dwarf,  
And wizard with his wand of might,  
And errant maid on palfrey white.  
Around the Genius weave their spells,  
Pure Love, who scarce his passion tells;  
Mystery, half veil'd and half reveal'd;  
And Honour, with his spotless shield;  
Attention, with fix'd eye; and Fear,*

*That loves the tale she shrinks to hear;  
And gentle Courtesy; and Faith,  
Unchanged by sufferings, time, or death;  
And Valour, lion-mettled lord,  
Leaning upon his own good sword.  
Well has thy fair achievement shown,  
A worthy meed may thus be won;  
Ytene's oaks-beneath whose shade  
Their theme the merry minstrels made,  
Of Ascapart, and Bevis bold,  
And that Red King, who, while of old,  
Through Boldrewood the chase he led,  
By his loved huntsman's arrow bled-  
Ytene's oaks have heard again  
Renew'd such legendary strain;  
For thou hast sung, how He of Gaul,  
That Amadis so famed in hall,  
For Oriana, foil'd in fight  
The Necromancer's felon might;  
And well in modern verse hast wove  
Partenopex's mystic love;  
Hear, then, attentive to my lay,  
A knightly tale of Albion's elder day.*

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## **CANTO FIRST**

### **THE CASTLE.**

#### **I.**

*Day set on Norham's castled steep,  
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,  
And Cheviot's mountains lone:  
The battled towers, the donjon keep,  
The loophole grates, where captives weep,  
The flanking walls that round it sweep,  
In yellow lustre shone.*

*The warriors on the turrets high,  
Moving athwart the evening sky,  
Seem'd forms of giant height:  
Their armour, as it caught the rays,  
Flash'd back again the western blaze,  
In lines of dazzling light.*



## **II.**

*Saint George's banner, broad and gay,  
Now faded, as the fading ray  
Less bright, and less, was flung;  
The evening gale had scarce the power  
To wave it on the Donjon Tower,  
So heavily it hung.*

*The scouts had parted on their search,  
The Castle gates were barr'd;  
Above the gloomy portal arch,  
Timing his footsteps to a march,  
The Warder kept his guard;  
Low humming, as he paced along,  
Some ancient Border gathering-song.*

## **III.**

*A distant trampling sound he hears;  
He looks abroad, and soon appears,  
O'er Horncliff-hill a plump of spears,  
Beneath a pennon gay;  
A horseman, darting from the crowd,  
Like lightning from a summer cloud,*

*Spurs on his mettled courser proud,  
Before the dark array.  
Beneath the sable palisade,  
That closed the Castle barricade,  
His buglehorn he blew;  
The warder hasted from the wall,  
And warn'd the Captain in the hall,  
For well the blast he knew;  
And joyfully that knight did call,  
To sewer, squire, and seneschal.*

#### **IV.**

*'Now broach ye a pipe of Malvoisie,  
Bring pasties of the doe,  
And quickly make the entrance free  
And bid my heralds ready be,  
And every minstrel sound his glee,  
And all our trumpets blow;  
And, from the platform, spare ye not  
To fire a noble salvo-shot;  
Lord MARMION waits below!  
Then to the Castle's lower ward  
Sped forty yeomen tall,*

*The iron-studded gates unbarr'd,  
Raised the portcullis' ponderous guard,  
The lofty palisade unsparr'd,  
And let the drawbridge fall.*

**V.**

*Along the bridge Lord Marmion rode,  
Proudly his red-roan charger trode,  
His helm hung at the saddlebow;  
Well by his visage you might know  
He was a stalworth knight, and keen,  
And had in many a battle been;  
The scar on his brown cheek reveal'd  
A token true of Bosworth field;  
His eyebrow dark, and eye of fire,  
Show'd spirit proud, and prompt to ire;  
Yet lines of thought upon his cheek  
Did deep design and counsel speak.  
His forehead by his casque worn bare,  
His thick mustache, and curly hair,  
Coal-black, and grizzled here and there,  
But more through toil than age;  
His square-turn'd joints, and strength of limb,*

*Show'd him no carpet knight so trim,  
But in close fight a champion grim,  
In camps a leader sage.*

## **VI.**

*Well was he arm'd from head to heel,  
In mail and plate of Milan steel;  
But his strong helm, of mighty cost,  
Was all with burnish'd gold emboss'd;  
Amid the plumage of the crest,  
A falcon hover'd on her nest,  
With wings outspread, and forward breast;  
E'en such a falcon, on his shield,  
Soar'd sable in an azure field:  
The golden legend bore aright,  
Who checks at me, to death is dight.  
Blue was the charger's broider'd rein;  
Blue ribbons deck'd his arching mane;  
The knightly housing's ample fold  
Was velvet blue, and trapp'd with gold.*

## VII.

*Behind him rode two gallant squires,  
Of noble name, and knightly sires;  
They burn'd the gilded spurs to claim:  
For well could each a warhorse tame,  
Could draw the bow, the sword could sway,  
And lightly bear the ring away;  
Nor less with courteous precepts stored,  
Could dance in hall, and carve at board,  
And frame love-ditties passing rare,  
And sing them to a lady fair.*

## VIII.

*Four men-at-arms came at their backs,  
With halbert, bill, and battle-axe:  
They bore Lord Marmion's lance so strong,  
And led his sumpter-mules along,  
And ambling palfrey, when at need  
Him listed ease his battle-steed.  
The last and trustiest of the four,  
On high his forky pennon bore;  
Like swallow's tail, in shape and hue,*

*Flutter'd the streamer glossy blue,  
Where, blazon'd sable, as before,  
The towering falcon seem'd to soar.  
Last, twenty yeomen, two and two,  
In hosen black, and jerkins blue,  
With falcons broider'd on each breast,  
Attended on their lord's behest.  
Each, chosen for an archer good,  
Knew hunting-craft by lake or wood;  
Each one a six-foot bow could bend,  
And far a cloth-yard shaft could send;  
Each held a boar-spear tough and strong,  
And at their belts their quivers rung.  
Their dusty palfreys, and array,  
Show'd they had march'd a weary way.*

## **IX.**

*'Tis meet that I should tell you now,  
How fairly arm'd, and order'd how,  
The soldiers of the guard,  
With musket, pike, and morion,  
To welcome noble Marmion,  
Stood in the Castle-yard;*

*Minstrels and trumpeters were there,  
The gunner held his linstock yare,  
For welcome-shot prepared:  
Enter'd the train, and such a clang,  
As then through all his turrets rang,  
Old Norham never heard.*

**X.**

*The guards their morrice-pikes advanced,  
The trumpets flourish'd brave,  
The cannon from the ramparts glanced,  
And thundering welcome gave.  
A blithe salute, in martial sort,  
The minstrels well might sound,  
For, as Lord Marmion cross'd the court,  
He scatter'd angels round.  
'Welcome to Norham, Marmion!  
Stout heart, and open hand!  
Well dost thou brook thy gallant roan,  
Thou flower of English land!'*

## XI.

*Two pursuivants, whom tabarts deck,  
With silver scutcheon round their neck,  
    Stood on the steps of stone,  
By which you reach the donjon gate,  
And there, with herald pomp and state,  
    They hail'd Lord Marmion:  
They hail'd him Lord of Fontenaye,  
    Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbaye,  
    Of Tamworth tower and town;  
And he, their courtesy to requite,  
Gave them a chain of twelve marks' weight,  
    All as he lighted down.  
'Now, largesse, largesse, Lord Marmion,  
    Knight of the crest of gold!  
A blazon'd shield, in battle won,  
    Ne'er guarded heart so bold.'*



## **XII.**

*They marshall'd him to the Castle-hall,  
Where the guests stood all aside,  
And loudly nourish'd the trumpet-call,  
And the heralds loudly cried,  
--'Room, lordings, room for Lord Marmion,  
With the crest and helm of gold!  
Full well we know the trophies won  
In the lists at Cottiswold:  
There, vainly Ralph de Wilton strove  
'Gainst Marmion's force to stand;  
To him he lost his lady-love,  
And to the King his land.  
Ourselves beheld the listed field,  
A sight both sad and fair;  
We saw Lord Marmion pierce his shield,  
And saw his saddle bare;  
We saw the victor win the crest,  
He wears with worthy pride;  
And on the gibbet-tree, reversed,  
His foeman's scutcheon tied.  
Place, nobles, for the Falcon-Knight!  
Room, room, ye gentles gay,  
For him who conquer'd in the right,  
Marmion of Fontenaye!'*

### XIII.

*Then stepp'd, to meet that noble Lord,  
Sir Hugh the Heron bold,  
Baron of Twisell, and of Ford,  
And Captain of the Hold.  
He led Lord Marmion to the deas,  
Raised o'er the pavement high,  
And placed him in the upper place  
They feasted full and high;  
The whiles a Northern harper rude  
Chanted a rhyme of deadly feud,  
'How the fierce Thirwalls, and Ridleys all,  
Stout Willimondswick,  
And Hardriding Dick,  
And Hughie of Hawdon, and Will o' the Wall,  
Have set on Sir Albany Featherstonhaugh,  
And taken his life at the Deadman's-shaw.'  
Scantly Lord Marmion's ear could brook  
The harper's barbarous lay;  
Yet much he praised the pains he took,  
And well those pains did pay  
For lady's suit, and minstrel's strain,  
By knight should ne'er be heard in vain,*

**XIV.**

*'Now, good Lord Marmion,' Heron says,*

*'Of your fair courtesy,*

*I pray you bide some little space*

*In this poor tower with me.*

*Here may you keep your arms from rust,*

*May breathe your war-horse well;*

*Seldom hath pass'd a week but giust*

*Or feat of arms befell:*

*The Scots can rein a mettled steed;*

*And love to couch a spear:-*

*Saint George! a stirring life they lead,*

*That have such neighbours near.*

*Then stay with us a little space,*

*Our northern wars to learn;*

*I pray you, for your lady's grace!'-*

*Lord Marmion's brow grew stern.*

**XV.**

*The Captain mark'd his alter'd look,  
And gave a squire the sign;  
A mighty wassell-bowl he took,  
And crown'd it high with wine.  
'Now pledge me here, Lord Marmion:  
But first I pray thee fair,  
Where hast thou left that page of thine,  
That used to serve thy cup of wine,  
Whose beauty was so rare?  
When last in Raby towers we met,  
The boy I closely eyed,  
And often mark'd his cheeks were wet,  
With tears he fain would hide:  
His was no rugged horse-boy's hand,  
To burnish shield or sharpen brand,  
Or saddle battle-steed;  
But meeter seem'd for lady fair,  
To fan her cheek, or curl her hair,  
Or through embroidery, rich and rare,  
The slender silk to lead:  
His skin was fair, his ringlets gold,  
His bosom-when he sigh'd,  
The russet doublet's rugged fold*

*Could scarce repel its pride!  
Say, hast thou given that lovely youth  
To serve in lady's bower?  
Or was the gentle page, in sooth,  
A gentle paramour?'*

**XVI.**

*Lord Marmion ill could brook such jest;  
He roll'd his kindling eye,  
With pain his rising wrath suppress'd,  
Yet made a calm reply:  
'That boy thou thought'st so goodly fair,  
He might not brook the northern air.  
More of his fate if thou wouldst learn,  
I left him sick in Lindisfarn:  
Enough of him.-But, Heron, say,  
Why does thy lovely lady gay  
Disdain to grace the hall to-day?  
Or has that dame, so fair and sage,  
Gone on some pious pilgrimage?'-  
He spoke in covert scorn, for fame  
Whisper'd light tales of Heron's dame.*

**XVII.**

*Unmark'd, at least unreck'd, the taunt,  
Careless the Knight replied,  
'No bird, whose feathers gaily flaunt,  
Delights in cage to bide:  
Norham is grim and grated close,  
Hemm'd in by battlement and fosse,  
And many a darksome tower;  
And better loves my lady bright  
To sit in liberty and light,  
In fair Queen Margaret's bower.  
We hold our greyhound in our hand,  
Our falcon on our glove;  
But where shall we find leash or band,  
For dame that loves to rove?  
Let the wild falcon soar her swing,  
She'll stoop when she has tired her wing.'--*

### **XVIII.**

*'Nay, if with Royal James's bride  
The lovely Lady Heron bide,  
Behold me here a messenger,  
Your tender greetings prompt to bear;  
For, to the Scottish court address'd,  
I journey at our King's behest,  
And pray you, of your grace, provide  
For me, and mine, a trusty guide.  
I have not ridden in Scotland since  
James back'd the cause of that mock prince,  
Warbeck, that Flemish counterfeit,  
Who on the gibbet paid the cheat.  
Then did I march with Surrey's power,  
What time we razed old Ayton tower.'*-

### **XIX.**

*'For such-like need, my lord, I trow,  
Norham can find you guides enow;  
For here be some have prick'd as far,  
On Scottish ground, as to Dunbar;  
Have drunk the monks of St. Bothan's ale,*

*And driven the beeves of Lauderdale;  
Harried the wives of Greenlaw's goods,  
And given them light to set their hoods.'*-

**XX.**

*'Now, in good sooth,' Lord Marmion cried,  
    'Were I in warlike wise to ride,  
    A better guard I would not lack,  
Than your stout forayers at my back;  
    But as in form of peace I go,  
    A friendly messenger, to know,  
Why through all Scotland, near and far,  
Their King is mustering troops for war,  
The sight of plundering Border spears  
    Might justify suspicious fears,  
And deadly feud, or thirst of spoil,  
Break out in some unseemly broil:  
    A herald were my fitting guide;  
    Or friar, sworn in peace to bide;  
Or pardoner, or travelling priest,  
    Or strolling pilgrim, at the least.'*



**XXI.**

*The Captain mused a little space,  
And pass'd his hand across his face.  
- 'Fain would I find the guide you want,  
But ill may spare a pursuivant,  
The only men that safe can ride  
Mine errands on the Scottish side:  
And though a bishop built this fort,  
Few holy brethren here resort;  
Even our good chaplain, as I ween,  
Since our last siege, we have not seen:  
The mass he might not sing or say,  
Upon one stinted meal a-day;  
So, safe he sat in Durham aisle,  
And pray'd for our success the while.  
Our Norham vicar, woe betide,  
Is all too well in case to ride;  
The priest of Shoreswood-he could rein  
The wildest war-horse in your train;  
But then, no spearman in the hall  
Will sooner swear, or stab, or brawl.  
Friar John of Tillmouth were the man:  
A blithesome brother at the can,  
A welcome guest in hall and bower,*

*He knows each castle, town, and tower,  
In which the wine and ale is good,  
'Twixt Newcastle and Holy-Rood.  
But that good man, as ill befalls,  
Hath seldom left our castle walls,  
Since, on the vigil of St. Bede,  
In evil hour, he cross'd the Tweed,  
To teach Dame Alison her creed.  
Old Bughtrig found him with his wife;  
And John, an enemy to strife,  
Sans frock and hood, fled for his life.  
The jealous churl hath deeply swore,  
That, if again he venture o'er,  
He shall shrieve penitent no more.  
Little he loves such risks, I know;  
Yet, in your guard, perchance will go.'*

## **XXII.**

*Young Selby, at the fair hall-board,  
Carved to his uncle and that lord,  
And reverently took up the word.  
'Kind uncle, woe were we each one,  
If harm should hap to brother John.*

*He is a man of mirthful speech,  
Can many a game and gambol teach;  
Full well at tables can he play,  
And sweep at bowls the stake away.  
None can a lustier carol bawl,  
The needfullest among us all,  
When time hangs heavy in the hall,  
And snow comes thick at Christmas tide,  
And we can neither hunt, nor ride  
A foray on the Scottish side.  
The vow'd revenge of Bughtrig rude,  
May end in worse than loss of hood.  
Let Friar John, in safety, still  
In chimney-corner snore his fill,  
Roast hissing crabs, or flagons swill:  
Last night, to Norham there came one,  
Will better guide Lord Marmion.'-  
'Nephew,' quoth Heron, 'by my fay,  
Well hast thou spoke; say forth thy say,'-*

### XXIII

*'Here is a holy Palmer come,  
From Salem first, and last from Rome;  
One, that hath kiss'd the blessed tomb,  
And visited each holy shrine,  
In Araby and Palestine;  
On hills of Armenie hath been,  
Where Noah's ark may yet be seen;  
By that Red Sea, too, hath he trod,  
Which parted at the Prophet's rod;  
In Sinai's wilderness he saw  
The Mount, where Israel heard the law,  
'Mid thunder-dint and flashing levin,  
And shadows, mists, and darkness, given.  
He shows Saint James's cockle-shell,  
Of fair Montserrat, too, can tell;  
And of that Grot where Olives nod,  
Where, darling of each heart and eye,  
From all the youth of Sicily,  
Saint Rosalie retired to God.*

**XXIV.**

*'To stout Saint George of Norwich merry,  
Saint Thomas, too, of Canterbury,  
Cuthbert of Durham and Saint Bede,  
For his sins' pardon hath he pray'd.  
He knows the passes of the North,  
And seeks far shrines beyond the Forth;  
Little he eats, and long will wake,  
And drinks but of the stream or lake.  
This were a guide o'er moor and dale;  
But, when our John hath quaff'd his ale,  
As little as the wind that blows,  
And warms itself against his nose,  
Kens he, or cares, which way he goes.'*-

**XXV.**

*'Gramercy!' quoth Lord Marmion,  
'Full loth were I, that Friar John,  
That venerable man, for me,  
Were placed in fear or jeopardy.  
If this same Palmer will me lead  
From hence to Holy-Rood,*

*Like his good saint, I'll pay his meed,  
Instead of cockle-shell, or bead,  
With angels fair and good.  
I love such holy rambles; still  
They know to charm a weary hill,  
With song, romance, or lay:  
Some jovial tale, or glee, or jest,  
Some lying legend, at the least,  
They bring to cheer the way.'-*

## **XXVI.**

*'Ah! noble sir,' young Selby said,  
And finger on his lip he laid,  
'This man knows much, perchance e'en more  
Than he could learn by holy lore.  
Still to himself he's muttering,  
And shrinks as at some unseen thing.  
Last night we listen'd at his cell;  
Strange sounds we heard, and, sooth to tell,  
He murmur'd on till morn, howe'er  
No living mortal could be near.  
Sometimes I thought I heard it plain,  
As other voices spoke again.*

*I cannot tell-I like it not-  
Friar John hath told us it is wrote,  
No conscience clear, and void of wrong,  
Can rest awake, and pray so long.  
Himself still sleeps before his beads  
Have mark'd ten aves, and two creeds.'-*

### **XXVII.**

*-‘Let pass,’ quoth Marmion; ‘by my fay,  
This man shall guide me on my way,  
Although the great arch-fiend and he  
Had sworn themselves of company.  
So please you, gentle youth, to call  
This Palmer to the Castle-hall.’  
The summon’d Palmer came in place;  
His sable cowl o’erhung his face;  
In his black mantle was he clad,  
With Peter’s keys, in cloth of red,  
On his broad shoulders wrought;  
The scallop shell his cap did deck;  
The crucifix around his neck  
Was from Loretto brought;  
His sandals were with travel tore,*

*Staff, budget, bottle, scrip, he wore;  
The faded palm-branch in his hand  
Show'd pilgrim from the Holy Land.*

### **XXVIII.**

*When as the Palmer came in hall,  
Nor lord, nor knight, was there more tall,  
Or had a statelier step withal,  
Or look'd more high and keen;  
For no saluting did he wait,  
But strode across the hall of state,  
And fronted Marmion where he sate,  
As he his peer had been.  
But his gaunt frame was worn with toil;  
His cheek was sunk, alas the while!  
And when he struggled at a smile,  
His eye look 'd haggard wild:  
Poor wretch! the mother that him bare,  
If she had been in presence there,  
In his wan face, and sun-burn'd hair,  
She had not known her child.  
Danger, long travel, want, or woe,  
Soon change the form that best we know-*



*For deadly fear can time outgo,  
And blanch at once the hair;  
Hard toil can roughen form and face,  
And want can quench the eye's bright grace,  
Nor does old age a wrinkle trace  
More deeply than despair.  
Happy whom none of these befall,  
But this poor Palmer knew them all.*

**XXIX.**

*Lord Marmion then his boon did ask;  
The Palmer took on him the task,  
So he would march with morning tide,  
To Scottish court to be his guide.  
'But I have solemn vows to pay,  
And may not linger by the way,  
To fair St. Andrews bound,  
Within the ocean-cave to pray,  
Where good Saint Rule his holy lay,  
From midnight to the dawn of day,  
Sung to the billows' sound;  
Thence to Saint Fillan's blessed well,  
Whose spring can frenzied dreams dispel,*

*And the crazed brain restore:  
Saint Mary grant, that cave or spring  
Could back to peace my bosom bring,  
Or bid it throb no more!*

**XXX.**

*And now the midnight draught of sleep,  
Where wine and spices richly steep,  
In massive bowl of silver deep,  
The page presents on knee.  
Lord Marmion drank a fair good rest,  
The Captain pledged his noble guest,  
The cup went through among the rest,  
Who drain'd it merrily;  
Alone the Palmer pass'd it by,  
Though Selby press'd him courteously.  
This was a sign the feast was o'er;  
It hush'd the merry wassel roar,  
The minstrels ceased to sound.  
Soon in the castle nought was heard,  
But the slow footstep of the guard,  
Pacing his sober round.*

**XXXI.**

*With early dawn Lord Marmion rose:  
And first the chapel doors unclose;  
Then, after morning rites were done,  
(A hasty mass from Friar John,)  
And knight and squire had broke their fast,  
On rich substantial repast,  
Lord Marmion's bugles blew to horse:  
Then came the stirrup-cup in course:  
Between the Baron and his host,  
No point of courtesy was lost;  
High thanks were by Lord Marmion paid,  
Solemn excuse the Captain made,  
Till, filing from the gate, had pass'd  
That noble train, their Lord the last.  
Then loudly rung the trumpet call;  
Thunder'd the cannon from the wall,  
And shook the Scottish shore;  
Around the castle eddied slow,  
Volumes of smoke as white as snow,  
And hid its turrets hoar;  
Till they roli'd forth upon the air,  
And met the river breezes there,*

***Free***editorial 