

# **SCENE III.--MARY BEATON'S chamber: night.**

In the dimly lit chamber of Mary Beaton, Chastelard waits, unsure if she will come, yet hopeful. He reflects on the last encounter with her, the subtleties of her gestures, and the lingering warmth of her hand, which fuels his anticipation. Even though he faces death, Chastelard finds solace in the end of his two-year wait, regardless of the outcome.

His musings are interrupted when Mary Beaton enters. Their exchange is fraught with emotion and misunderstanding. Chastelard, mistaking Mary for another in the dim light, expresses his desire for her with passionate intensity, believing he recognizes her by her touch and presence alone. When Mary Beaton speaks, it's with a plea for death, believing herself shamed beyond redemption. She begs Chastelard to kill her, to spare her the torment of living with her embarrassment.

Chastelard is shaken by her request but refuses to harm her, instead offering consolation and imploring her not to view herself through the lens of shame. He assures her of his unwavering respect and offers his lifelong service, a testament to the depth of his feelings. Mary Beaton, however, is consumed by her disgrace, fearing ridicule and scorn from others, even as Chastelard tries to convince her of his genuine regard.

Their intimate, yet tumultuous interaction is cut short by the arrival of others, prompted by Mary Beaton's urgent plea for Chastelard to hide. The sudden intrusion of Mary Seyton and Mary Hamilton brings a momentary panic, fearing they've been caught. Chastelard, however, remains calm, questioning the late-night disturbance as the chapter draws to a close, leaving readers with a sense of impending confrontation

and uncertainty about Chastelard and Mary Beaton's fate.

This chapter vividly portrays the complex interplay of love, honor, and disgrace through its characters' charged dialogue, set against the backdrop of a secretive night-time meeting that threatens to unravel in the presence of outside intrusion.