

Date: 26 December 1565

REF: GD112/39/5/14 (SHS ed. No. 76)

Place: Burleigh¹ (Kinross-shire)

From: James Douglas, 4th Earl of Morton²

To: Katherine Ruthven, Lady Glenorchy

Address: To ye rycht honorabill Lady and his verray gude and speciall freind the Lady of
Glenvrquhart

Madam efter my hertlie recommendatiounis. I resavit zour writting and vnderstandis be ye samyn the Laird zour husbandis gude mynde towart me of ye quhilk I thank zow hertlie. And als I persave sum inpedimentis apperand till occur quhairby ze desyre the day appointit in Edinburgh to ye Lairdis yaircuming till be continewit. I think ze do knaw ye vnfreindis yat ze haif in court quha will be glayd to find ony occasioun to put zour husband in ye Quenis disfavouris giff thay may lyk as thay haif gayn aboute till do the samyn sen zour parting. Quhairfor my counsall is that the Laird failt nocht till keip the said day giff it be possible.³ For I trest swrelie he may repair to ye courte and do his besnes without danger of warding or ony vyer inconuenient for he may be assurit he sall want na gude will nor favour that lysis in my power like as God willing he sall rather knaw be experience nor wordis. For instantle I knaw swrelie ye Quenis Majeste hes na vder nor ane gude opinioun of him. Referand all vder thingis till meting desiring zour Ladyship in ye mene tyme till mak my maist hertlie commendatioun till him. And thus committis till the protectioun of ye Almychty. At [Burly] ye xxvj of December 1565.

Be zour Ladyshipis verray gude and loving
freind at powar

¹ Morton was probably staying with Michael Balfour of Burleigh.

² The only part of the signature which remains on the letter is a slight tail of a possible crossed T which has similarities to Morton's signature on 19 September 1570 [157]. The address on this letter is also similar to those found on Morton's letters to Grey Colin, particularly 19 September 1570 [157]. Morton knew Katherine well and had discussed matters of policy with her, [16]. Although he had sympathies and previous ties with the Chase-about Raiders he had remained at Court and was in Edinburgh attending the Council in the middle of December 1565, RPC, I, 383. Mary, Queen of Scots, was sufficiently suspicious of his loyalty to demand that Morton hand over Tantallon Castle, 7 January 1566, RPC, I, 417. A couple of months later it was Morton and Ruthven who were primarily involved in the murder of Riccio, G. Hewitt, Scotland under Morton, [Edinburgh, 1982], 5-7.

³ There was an attempt to get the date for Grey Colin's summons before the Council postponed but the strong advice here is to come for the due date. It is assumed that Katherine will also come to court.