

boughs and wild myrtle, looked green and kindly in the sunshine before the Castle bell rang out the hour of nine, in the distance beyond the woods.

The crowd dispersed in groups, quietly taking their way back to the Castle, led by Duncan, who, as foster-brother, was chosen to dispense the Master's last hospitality.

Morna and James were left alone by the grave. The wind blew keen and free from the hills across the roofless walls. The cry of the moor birds circled and was lost. The blue deepened in the heavens.—All had been done as Ian had foreseen and bidden.

And now the dreadful hour had struck when there was no more to do: the hour when the waters of bitterness rush upon the soul. Morna slowly put from her the veil that had hidden her face and cast herself upon the grave, pressing her cheek against the fragrant boughs. James knew that no words he could say would reach her; that it must break over her, wave after wave, this irresistible tide, overwhelming every faculty of mind and spirit, every spring of hope, the warmth of life itself.

He knew that to the limitless sorrow of her loss was added the voice of that remorse which, now for as long as the earth held her, would never cease its clamour at her heart. She lay, without moving, save for the shuddering sighs that escaped her now and again.

This hour of first communion with the inevitable had to be gone through, James knew; and fain would he have given her time, fain have waited, have avoided intrusion at least, since he could not help. But another duty pressed on him urgently. He had seen his brother laid to rest: he had yet to render the last honours to his father.

He came round to her and, kneeling beside her, touched the hand which lay outflung. She started and lifted her head. He thought that Ian's face, as he had last seen it, had not looked so reft of life.—On Ian's face there had been peace—!