

"The search has been abandoned?"

"So far as I am concerned, it has," responded the girl, with a slight gesture of impatience. "But why speak of these things? Surely heaven is a better judge than we of how the matters of earth should be ordained; if it were not heaven's intention, the document had not been destroyed."

"You are convinced it *is* destroyed?"

"How should I know, more than you? Its disappearance would argue its destruction. Perhaps—who can tell—my uncle may have realized how grave was the injustice of the deed which took from a Brandon all a Brandon holds dear—his home, the cradle of his race, the pillar of his strength—and gave them to an unworthy girl."

"Not *unworthy*, Lady Eleanor. You malign yourself."

"All are unworthy to hold a Brandon's heritage who are not Brandons born," declared Lady Eleanor warmly. "What