

For let all the Churchmen and cynics in this world say nay, but the best hope and restorer in this world for a poor castaway man, such as I was, is the true love of a good and sweet woman.

There is little more of this story to tell. The next week a dread matter happened in Scotland. While I was being made happy, and was still helpless, and the poor lady countess was wrestling betwixt her pride and her sense of right, the news came that the young Prince David of Rothsay was found starved to death in the Douglas hold, and the proud Albany came down from his perch. Then my case came out. For my love had sent message at once to her friends of the whole merits of my cause, and the great cruelty done me; and then another matter happened. The priest, mine uncle, who nearly died, did me justice at last, and a message came down post haste from Perth, where the King was staying, with a great document, proclaiming my rights as rightful Earl of the Cattynes, as elder son of Ian, the late earl, and his first wife and countess the Lady Morna MacLeod, whom report falsely proclaimed had been divorced, but which not being so, I as true heir of my father succeeded. When this news reached my lady countess, she rose from her couch, uttered my name with a terrible invective, and fell dead.

My brother Hugh departed soon after. He left me a letter, which was read to me by my dear nurse and counsellor; it ran as follows, and I could not but grieve over it: "Ian, my brother," it said, "forgive me and