

in my mind. I cannot speak to her—I do not need to do so—but I can and will to you. Lord Dion, Katherine Lowther loves you. She has always loved you, not knowing, perhaps, through all those years of close companionship, exactly what her feelings meant. You have only to speak the word to open the portals of her heart, which would be flung wide to receive a most honoured and loved guest.”

With a thin hand Lord Dion wiped the perspiration from his brow.

“You torture me,” he said. “You make me suffer more than you can possibly realise.”

“If I make you suffer, it is that you may rejoice ever afterwards, that you may quaff to the bottom the brimming cup of life.”

Drumming in his ears were the words, “Katherine Lowther loves you. She has always loved you, not knowing through those years of close companionship exactly what her feelings meant.”

Could it be true? Could it be possible? He would have believed it from no one else. But the knowledge and wit of this shrewd woman convinced him almost against his will.

“I am not worthy of her. I have never even dared to look at such a prospect. I have striven to keep it even from my dreams.” He clasped