

LETTER

Elizabeth (1533–1603), Queen of England (1558–1603)
to Henry IV (1553–1610), King of France (1589–1610)

12 November 1593

Ah, what grief! Ah, what regret! Ah, what pangs have seized my heart at the news which Morlant¹ has communicated! My God! Is it possible that any worldly consideration could render you regardless of the divine displeasure? Can we reasonably expect any good result can follow such an iniquity? How could you imagine that He, whose hand has supported and upheld your cause so long, would fail you at your need? It is a perilous thing to do ill that good may come of it! Nevertheless, I yet hope your better feelings my return and, in the meantime, I promise to give you the first place in my prayers that Esau's hands may not defile the blessing of Jacob. The friendship and fidelity you promise to me, I own I have dearly earned; but of that I should never have repented if you had not abandoned your father. I cannot now regard myself as your sister, for I always prefer that which is natural to that which is adopted, as God best knows, whom I beseech to guard and keep you in the right way, with better feelings.

Your sister, if it be after the old fashion: with the new I will have nothing to do.

W. Baptiste Scoones, *Four Centuries of English Letters* (London: Kegan Paul, 1893):27.

¹ Morlant, French Ambassador to England