

groaned, and despite my bewilderment I laughed until I was near to choking.

"Oh, you make too much of the matter, my good friend," said Antonio, with a look of humorous tolerance which dazed me—this was not his usual way of dealing with such happenings, I knew it well. "Surely you have lost all sense of humor if you rave so over a merry prank that has done you no lasting harm. Sir John's wit is of a rough kind, perhaps, and reeks more of the camp than the Court, but we must pardon something in one who is so good a friend to Verona. Besides, it is plain that you brought all this on yourself by an imprudent remark concerning a man who has my favor. Keep a still tongue next time, and all will be well. Now go get a doctor for your hurts, though I think they are not deep ones." Del Mayno flung out both his hands in indignant protest, and seemed about to favor us with another tirade, but the Prince's patience was exhausted. "Go, Del Mayno, do you hear? I have said that the matter is ended, and what I say I mean. Are you master in this palace, or am I?" His tone was so menacing that Del Mayno, with a gesture of despair, turned and struggled up the staircase—a true pilgrimage of penance, for he groaned and panted at every step.

In the silence that followed I heard O'Meara draw his breath and mutter audibly, "Thank the blissid saints for this miracle, then—'tis no less!" Still speechless with astonishment, I sat down slowly,