

me laugh again to think how I had served the splendid Del Mayno.

Even as I thought of this gentleman he took the centre of the stage. Pulling himself together, he staggered over to where Antonio stood at the foot of the staircase. He was still panting wildly, but was already breathing wrath and vengeance. "My lord, my lord, this is beyond bearing," he wheezed passionately. "Am I, as great a noble as any man in Verona save yourself—yes, and your own kin by marriage—to be put to shame by this adventurer from heaven knows where, and jeered at by his soldiers, and made the laughing-stock of all the city? Never shall I hear the end of this outrage! I have been made a mock of—and oh, my sufferings! Holy saints, I think I shall never walk again!" He fell on the lowest step, clutching wildly at his bleeding legs. "He pricked me, he lacerated me, and that last thrust of his—if the Virgin herself had not aided me I could never have found strength to jump above it, and he would have shorn my feet off at the ankles! Will you endure this outrage, my good lord?"

The Prince stood regarding me with a dark frown. A little more and his self-control would leave him, and then a pretty tempest would fall about my ears. "Sir John," he said coldly, "can you explain this whim of yours? Do you choose my kin for your horse-play, and my loggia for its scene? Faith, I had thought Francesco Carrara and his Paduans