

before your eyes, and Lord Raimondo, a powerful noble, was not used to such attentions. With a wild snort of mingled rage and fear he pulled his sword loose and came at me in a fury. I gave an exclamation of triumph. All was as I would have it now.

The difference in rank which he had forgotten his friends remembered for him. There was a cry of horror from the young courtiers. "Insolence!" shouted Della Torre. "Come, let us cut down this adventurer who would butcher the Prince's kinsman!" For an instant I felt some alarm, but it was needless.

"I'm thinking you do very well where you are, and that there you'll stay, my jewels," O'Meara remarked blandly, and my uneasiness faded as quickly as it had come. He had poignantly regretted, I knew, his own exclusion from the quarrel, and was overjoyed at an opportunity to mix in it. "Here, you rogues, come aid your captain!" At which my men, having no mind at all to see the sport spoiled, pushed roughly in between the courtiers and myself, and kept a clear space in which Del Mayno and I might decide the issue as man to man. Under these circumstances it was child's play for me to do what I would, for in all my life I have met but three swordsmen—by name, the Black Prince, Sir John Chandos, and Bertrand du Guesclin—who could best me, and Lord Raimondo was as a babe in my hands.