

race, a family in which the father slew the son and the husband the wife; and, unless report slandered him, he had himself the blood of his only brother on his conscience. There was an ominous threat under his languid pretense of indifference—his veiled sleepy eyes sometimes held the fierce glint of a wild beast's rage; and more than once I had seen him, when startled into anger, drop all his airs and graces, and rave in a violent fashion that might well chill the blood of any in his power. He accorded me civil treatment, however, for I was not a little useful to him. Would he choose to be indulgent now, or not, I wondered, as I gazed at his slim, lazy, insolent figure, glittering in violet velvet slashed with gold and sewn with pearls. In a trial of strength I could have broken his neck, and the knowledge gave me a kind of scorn for what he might do.

There was silence for a moment, while the rabble about the gate eyed me with reverence, and the crowd in the gallery gave me looks of scorn. I stood indifferent, staring back at them. No doubt I wore the plainest attire that could have been found that day in all the Scaligeri palace, where even the servants went splendidly dressed. I had a loose leather jerkin and a short red cloak over my steel cuirass, there was dust on my high boots, and the plume in my hat was dragged, though it still arched with a ruffling air of arrogance. Even O'Meara, clad in the spoil of many a foray, far outshone me. I could feel the scorn in the bright eyes above, and it made