

the Baron fell back in a perfect paroxysm of merriment.

As he fell back, Guido—for the disguised jester was none other than he, that is, than him—sprang forward and seized from the girdle of the Margrave the key of the great door that dangled at his waist.

Then, casting aside the jester's cloak and cap, he rose to his full height, standing in his coat of mail.

In one hand he brandished the double-headed mace of the Crusader, and in the other a horn.

The guests sprang to their feet, their hands upon their daggers.

"Guido the Gimlet!" they cried.

"Hold," said Guido, "I have you in my power!!"

Then placing the horn to his lips and drawing a deep breath, he blew with his utmost force.

And then again he blew—blew like anything
Not a sound came.

The horn wouldn't blow!

"Seize him!" cried the Baron.

"Stop," said Guido, "I claim the laws of chivalry. I am here to seek the Lady Isolde, betrothed by you to Tancred. Let me fight Tancred in single combat, man to man."

A shout of approbation gave consent.

The combat that followed was terrific.

First Guido, raising his mace high in the air with both hands, brought it down with terrible force on Tancred's mailed head. Then Guido stood still, and Tancred raising his mace in the air brought it down upon Guido's head. Then