

more venomous. They would tear the castle stone from stone. They would burn it to ashes, once pillaged of its treasures. It was a wild scene, terrific even, with the background of an angry sky, dull red on ashen gray. The passions of those fierce men rose tumultuous as a tempest and turned against the stranger, who stood calmly with folded arms looking at them. He had risked much on that one venture, and he now knew that, with all his marvelous ingenuity and resourcefulness, he, Jambe d'Argent, was powerless to save the chateau, or even his own life. He very deliberately drew his sword, as a ring of brutal-faced ruffians began to close about him.

"He is an aristocrat!" they shrieked. "He seeks to save this nest of aristocrats and deprive honest republicans of their due. We shall burn the chateau, and roast him at the same fire which consumes it."

"Meantime, I should advise you not to draw too near," observed Jambe d'Argent; "this is a very keen blade of mine, a pretty piece of steel, with a pretty taste in *sansculottes*."

"Tear him to pieces! Close upon him! Break his sword into bits!" screamed the furious Jacobins, waving their red caps.

But it was those in the background who did most of the screaming, and the men who were quite close to Jambe d'Argent were in no haste to draw near. Something in the resolute mien of the man awed them, and the flash of his sword seemed to dazzle their eyes. Yet not even the strongest will nor the most determined bravery on the part of one man can long prevail against a horde of lawless men, whose passions are inflamed by greed or cruelty. A simultaneous yell was uttered, and a mad rush from behind thrust forward those surrounding Jambe d'Argent, so that his sword was all but ineffectual. Pikes were raised above his head, muskets pointed at his heart, and one