

Empress Octavia

the fellow run away from a couple of leopards. And the one over there with the long nose which he is constantly sticking into people's ears, must be a barber. Tell him not to forget to wear a mask during the day time in future. How can one insult the air with such a nose! But I would like to see him in a fight with the nets. And that lean fellow. Tell him to pour lead into the soles of his sandals, that the wind may not blow him away. Aha! And there sit my Senators, who, spite of their purple-bordered pomp, are only the puppets of the Cæsar's will. What is to prevent my showing them some day naked to the people in the arena? Look yonder at Piso, he grows older and gloomier every day. And there is the chaste Æmilia; I should like to have her, too, in the arena, or hide a young buffoon in her chamber at night. But how the beautiful Justina has adorned herself to-day; I should like to know where her husband gets his money — "

So Nero talks on, without waiting for a reply, drums with his fingers on the edge of the box, gazes through a polished emerald at the spectators, and at last lapses into a bored silence. The Consul Piso whispers to his neighbor: "He looks ill, Justinus." In fact,