

expected of a christian, and when the padrona still tried to carry out her will, the holy man spoke to her in words so harsh and stern that she yielded. the signorina is now lying in bed with burning cheeks, raving in delirium. and who is attending the patient i came to you about the physician, my dear sir, for doctor de bout, who instantly obeyed my summons, was treated so badly by the old excellenza, that he turned his back upon her and told me, at the door of the house, he wouldnt come again. wilhelm shook his head, and the italian continued, there are other doctors in leyden, but father damianus says de bont or bontius, as they call him, is the most skilful and learned of them all, and as the old excellenza herself had an attack of illness about noon, and certainly wont leave her bed very speedily, the way is open, and father damianus says hell go to doctor bontius himself is necessary. but as you are a native of the city and acquainted with the signorina, i wanted to spare him the rebuff he would probably meet from the foe of our holy church. the poor man has enough to suffer from good for nothing boys and scoffers, when he goes through the city with the sacrament. you know people are strictly forbidden to disturb him in the exercise of his calling. yet he cant show himself in the street without being jeered. we two cannot change the world, sir. so long as the church had the upper hand, she burned and quartered you, now you have the power here, our priests are persecuted and scorned. against the law and the orders of the magistrates. you cant control the people, and father damianus is a lamb, who bears everything patiently, as good a christian as many saints before whom we burn that you are indeed soldiers of the most high. not one rebelled, and when man by man each had placed himself at his post, he went to the precipice and looked attentively down at the fight that was raging below. the pharanites were now opposing the attack of the blemmyes with success, for phoebicius, rushing forward with his men from their ambush, had fallen upon the compact mass of the sons of the desert in flank and, spreading death and ruin, had divided them into two bodies. the well trained and well armed romans seemed to have an easy task with their naked opponents, who, in a hand to hand fight, could not avail themselves of either their arrows or their spears. but the blemmyes had learned to use their strength in frequent battles with the imperial troops, and so soon as they perceived that they were no match for their enemies in pitched battle, their leaders set up a strange shrill cry, their ranks dissolved, and they dispersed in all directions, like a heap of feathers strewn by a gust of wind. agapitus took the hasty disappearance of the enemy for wild flight, he sighed deeply and thankfully and turned to go down to the field of battle, and to speak consolation to his wounded fellow christians. but in the castle itself he found opportunity for exercising his pious office, for before him stood the shepherdess whom he had already observed on his arrival and she said with much embarrassment, but clearly and quickly, old stephanus there, my lord bishop hermas father for whom i carry water bids me ask you to come to him; for his wound has reopened and he thinks his end is near. agapitus immediately obeyed this call; he went with hasty steps towards the sick man, whose wound paulus and minded to search your house, and if i find my undutiful wife and your son within its walls, i will carry them and you before the judge, and sue for my rights. you will seek in vain, replied petrus, commanding himself with difficulty. my word is yea or nay, and i repeat once more no, we harbor neither her nor him. as for dorothea and myself neither of us is inclined to interfere in your concerns, but neither will we permit another be he whom he may to interfere in ours. this threshold shall never be crossed by any but those to whom i grant permission, or by the emperors judge, to whom i must yield. you, i forbid to enter. sirona is not here, and you would do better to seek her elsewhere than to fritter away youre your time here. i do not require your advice cried the centurion wrathfully. and i, retorted petrus, do not feel myself called upon to arrange your matrimonial difficulties. besides you can get back sirona without our help, for it is always more difficult to keep a wife safe in the house, than to fetch her back when she has run away. you shall learn whom you have to deal with threatened the centurion, and he threw a glance round at the slaves, who had collected in the court, and who had been joined by the senators eldest son. i shall call my people together at once, and if you have the seducer