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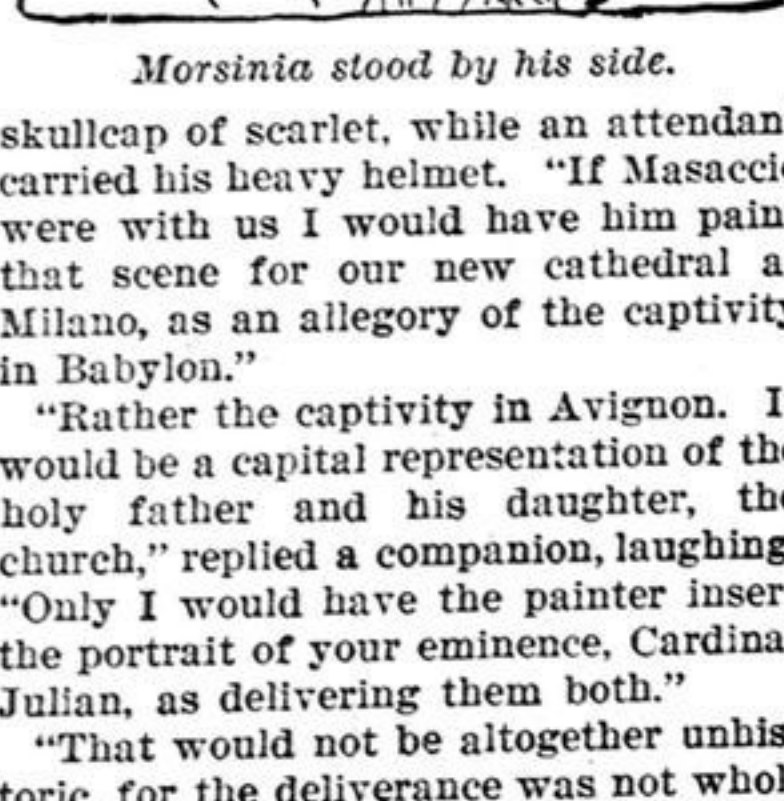
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The Captain of the Janizaries By JAMES M. LUDLOW

With the first streak of the dawn Kabilovitch crept cautiously from the ledge and soon returned with the news that the Turks had vanished—swept away by the tide of Christian soldiers which was still pouring over and down the mountain in pursuit.

Horrible was the scene which everywhere greeted them as they clambered back toward the road. The dead were piled upon the dying in every ravine. Red streaks seamed the white snow—channels in which the current of many a life had drained away.



Morsinia stood by his side. skullcap of scarlet, while an attendant carried his heavy helmet. "If Masaccio were with us I would have him paint that scene for our new cathedral at Milano, as an allegory of the captivity in Babylon."

"Rather the captivity in Avignon. It would be a capital representation of the holy father and his daughter, the church," replied a companion, laughing. "Only I would have the painter insert the portrait of your eminence, Cardinal Julian, as delivering them both."

"I can pardon that speech to the newly baptized king of half barbarian Hungary, when I would not shrive another for it," replied Julian petulantly. "Let us speak to this old fellow. Good man, is this your house?"

with no other aim than to keep himself warm. Let Kabilovitch noted that he looked as he passed by the various groups as if to scan the faces of his fellow sufferers.

"Heaven grant that all his kids be safe tonight!" muttered the old man. As the walking figure passed across the line of a fagot fire he revealed a splendid form, too straight for one accustomed to bend at his daily toil.

"A mountaineer? A hunter?" thought Kabilovitch. "For the field tillers are all round of shoulder and bow backed. But, no! His tread is too firm and heavy for that sort of life. One's limbs are springy, agile, who climbs the crags. A hunter will use the toes more to ascend."

Kabilovitch's curiosity could not keep his eyes from growing heavy with the cold and the flicker of the firelight when they were forced wide open again by the approach of the stranger.

"By the beard of Moses, it's an awful neighbor!" "Aye, by the beard of Moses, it is, and one could wear the beard of Aaron, too, with comfort. Aaron's beard was longer than Moses' beard. Is not that what the priest says?"

"What know you of the beard of Moses?" said the stranger. "Was it gray or black?" "Black," said Kabilovitch, studying the other's face with suspicion and surprise. "Black as an Albanian thunder-bolt, and his eye was as undimmed by age as that of the eagle that flies over the lake of Ochrida."

"You speak well," replied the stranger, pushing back his hood. His face was massive and strong. No peasant was he, but one born to command and accustomed to it. "You are—Drakul?" asked the man.

"No." "Harion?" "No." "Kabilovitch?" "Aye, and you?" "Castriot?" Kabilovitch sprang to his feet. "Lie down! Lie down! Let me share your blanket!" said the visitor. We can muffle our speech beneath the blanket. I feared that I should find no one who recognized our password.

"Readily," said Kabilovitch. "During the day my little lass yonder won the attention of King Vladislava, and he gave me the password of the camp tonight for her safety. 'Christus natus est.'"

"You must go to him at once and say I would see him here. You will trust me to keep guard over these two kids while you are away? I will not wolf them."

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