

Meduna to Ezzelin

by Daniel Galef

Meduna, the Countess of Ravenna, to Her Husband Ezzelin Surnamed Braccioferro, Who Is Absent in the Holy Land on the Second Crusade (after a painting by Fuseli)

Faith!—on faith, I am full-up on that,
both yours and mine, and bursting at my bond.
(My will is iron, but the belt is groaning.)
It's true that absence makes the mind grow fond,
and overfond, and foolish. If, atoning,
I sewed a scallop-shell upon my hat
and came and found you on the field—dead, moaning,
or lunching in your tent—could we abscond
and toss your templars, termagants, and tat?
Or maybe I might slip between the slat
and fan the pyre with a martyr's frond
or send the sinless soldiers in for stoning;
but this cold bed's no altar, and the wine,
if it should turn to blood, will just be mine.