

In the marble quarries on the mountain slopes north of the castle, the master sculptors had pointed their long sticks at the best blocks while eyeing the Gallic captives toiling in the sultry heat. Shielded and fanned by palm branches, squinting in the blinding sun, the sculptors took in the rippling of the muscles, the bending and stretching of the sweating bodies. The defeated warriors, driven here in chains, hanging from ropes on the rock faces, smashing crowbars and wedges into the strata of glittering, bluish white, crystalline-like limestone, and transporting the gigantic ashlar on long wooden sleds down the twisting paths, were notorious for their savagery, their brutal customs, and in the evenings the lords with their retinues passed them timidly when the stinking prisoners, drunk on cheap rotgut, were camping in a pit. Up in the gardens of the castle, however, in the gentle breeze wafting up from the sea, the huge bearded faces became the stuff of the sculptors' dreams, and they remembered ordering one man or another to stand still, opening his eye wide, pulling his lips apart to view his teeth, they recalled the arteries swelling on his temples, the glistening nose, zygomas, and forehead emerging from the cast shadows. They could still hear the lugging and shoving, the stemming of shoulders and backs against the weight of the stone, the rhythmic shouts, the curses, the whip cracks, the grinding of sled runners in the sand, and they could see the figures of the frieze slumbering in the marble coffins. Slowly they scraped forth the limbs, felt them, saw forms emerge whose essence was perfection. With the plundered people transferring their energies into relaxed and receptive thoughts, degradation and lust for power produced art.