

who will appear tomorrow!”

ammed the sidewalks, so Marcus could not get through. Now
oice but to put down the laundry sack and wait.

on white horses led the parade, their riders waving bright
l of horn players followed, and then acrobats and jugglers,
stout man with a leering smile. He was the *lanista* — the
se gladiators.

ita waved at the crowd, proud as an emperor. Owning
as a dirty business; no respectable person would do it. But
ad grown rich on the blood of his gladiators, and he held his



And then there was Cyclops, led by two young women in bright
who were throwing rose petals.

“There he is!” a woman in the crowd shrieked, pointing at the
muscled brute.

The champion wore a gleaming bronze helmet. His massive s
matched the armor strapped to his bulging legs and arms. A leath
hid his blind eye. Scars covered his face. Marcus had heard terrifi
stories about this man — that he had jaws like a tiger’s, that his b
was like a panther’s scream, that he could snap a man’s neck with
hand.

The crowd cheered and hooted as Cyclops passed.

But people stood silently as the next four men walked by. The
the wretched souls who would be thrown into the arena with Cyc
tomorrow. None of them had a chance against Cyclops. By tomor
afternoon, they’d all be dead.

Marcus couldn’t bear to watch them. But then he caught sight
last man in line.

Marcus froze, staring.

The man was tall, with golden hair streaming out of his bronz
helmet. He walked slowly, with dignity. A guard followed him, jal
him in the back with a spear to move him along.

The man turned his head, and the sun lit up his proud face an
glinting blue eyes.

Could it be?

The pounding in Marcus’s heart told the answer.

And suddenly Marcus was running wildly into the street.

“Tata!” Marcus screamed.