



Gemini: The Eighth Book of The House of Niccolo

Dorothy Dunnett

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Scotland, 1477: Nicholas de Fleury, former banker and merchant, has re-appeared in the land that, four years earlier, he had brought very close to ruin in the course of an intense commercial and personal war with secret enemies--and, indeed, with his clever wife Gelis.

Now the opportunity for redemption is at hand, but Nicholas soon finds himself pursuing his objectives amid a complex, corrosive power struggle centering on the Scottish royal family but closely involving the powerful merchants of Edinburgh, the gentry, the clergy, the English (ever seeking an excuse to pounce on their neighbor to the north), the French, the Burgundians. His presence soon draws Gelis and their son Jodi to Scotland, as well as Nicholas's companions and subordinates in many a past endeavor--Dr. Tobias and his wife Clémence, Mick Crackbene, John le Grant, and Andro Wodman among them. Here, too, Nicholas meets again with others who have had an influence, for good or evil, in his life: King James III of Scotland and his rebellious siblings; the St. Pols: Jordan, Simon, and young Henry; Mistress Bel of Cuthilgurdy and David de Salmeton; Anselm Adorne and Kathi his niece. Caught up in, and sometimes molding, the course of great events, Nicholas exhibits by turns the fierce silence with which he masks his secrets, and the explosive, willful gaiety that binds men, women, and children to him. And as the secrets of his birth and heritage come to light, Nicholas has to decide whether he desires to establish a future in Scotland for himself and his family, and a home for his descendants.

Gemini brings to a dazzling conclusion Dorothy Dunnett's *House of Niccolò* series (synopsized in this volume), in which this peerless novelist has vividly re-created the dramatic, flamboyant world of the early Renaissance in historical writing of scrupulous authenticity and in the entrancing portrait of her visionary hero. Now, in a book infused with wit and poetry, emotion and humor, action and mystery, she brings Nicholas de Fleury at last to choose his heart's home, where he can exercise all his skills as an advisor to kings and statesmen, as a husband, a father, and a leader of men--and where, perhaps, we will discern a connection between him and that other remarkable personality, Francis Crawford, whose exploits Lady Dunnett recorded so memorably in *The Lymond Chronicles*.

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