Alfieri #1

Alfieri: You wouldn’t have known it, but something amusing has just happened. You see how uneasily they nod to me? That’s because I am a lawyer. In this neighborhood to meet a lawyer or a priest on the street is unlucky. We’re only thought of in connection with disasters, and they’d rather not get too close.

I often think that behind that suspicious little nod of theirs lie three thousand years of distrust. A lawyer means the law, and in Sicily, from where their father’s came, the law has not been a friendly idea since the Greeks were beaten. But this is Red Hook, not Sicily. This is the slum that faces the bay on the seaward side of the Brooklyn Bridge. This is the gullet of New York swallowing the tonnage of the world.