

CHAPTER SEVEN

“A common thief!”

Schomberg bit his tongue just too late, and woke up completely as he saw Ricardo retract his lips in a cat-like grin; but the companion of “plain Mr. Jones” didn't alter his comfortable, gossiping attitude.

“Garn! What if he did want to see his money back, like any tame shopkeeper, hash-seller, gin-slinger, or ink-spewer does? Fancy a mud turtle like you trying to pass an opinion on a gentleman! A gentleman isn't to be sized up so easily. Even I ain't up to it sometimes. For instance, that night, all he did was to waggle his finger at me. The skipper stops his silly chatter, surprised.

“Eh? What's the matter?’ asks he.

“The matter! It was his reprieve—that's what was the matter.

“O, nothing, nothing,’ says my gentleman. ‘You are perfectly right. A log—nothing but a log.’

“Ha, ha! Reprieve, I call it, because if the skipper had gone on with his silly argument much longer he would have had to be knocked out of the way. I could hardly hold myself in on account of the precious minutes. However, his guardian angel put it into his head to shut up and go back to his bed. I was ramping mad about the lost time.”

“Why didn't you let me give him one on his silly coconut sir?’ I asks.

“No ferocity, no ferocity,’ he says, raising his finger at me as calm as you please.

“You can't tell how a gentleman takes that sort of thing. They don't lose their temper. It's bad form. You'll never see him lose his temper—not for anybody to see anyhow. Ferocity ain't good form, either—that much I've learned by this time, and more, too. I've had that schooling that you couldn't tell by my face if I meant to rip you up the next minute—as of course I could do in less than a jiffy. I have a knife up the leg of my trousers.”

“You haven't!” exclaimed Schomberg incredulously.

Mr. Ricardo was as quick as lightning in changing his lounging, idle attitude for a stooping position, and exhibiting the weapon with one jerk at the left leg of his trousers. Schomberg had just a view of it, strapped to a very hairy limb, when Mr. Ricardo, jumping up, stamped his foot to get the trouser-leg down, and resumed his careless pose with one elbow on the table.

“It's a more handy way to carry a tool than you would think,” he went on, gazing abstractedly into Schomberg's wide-open eyes. “Suppose some little difference comes up during a game. Well, you stoop to pick up a dropped card, and when you come up—there you are ready to strike, or with the thing up you

sleeve ready to throw. Or you just dodge under the table when there's some shooting coming. You wouldn't believe the damage a fellow with a knife under the table can do to ill-conditioned skunks that want to raise trouble, before they begin to understand what the screaming's about, and make a bolt—those that can, that is.”

The roses of Schomberg's cheek at the root of his chestnut beard faded perceptibly. Ricardo chuckled faintly.

“But no ferocity—no ferocity! A gentleman knows. What's the good of getting yourself into a state? And no shirking necessity, either. No gentleman ever shirks. What I learn I don't forget. Why! We gambled on the plains, with a damn lot of cattlemen in ranches; played fair, mind—and then had to fight for our winnings afterwards as often as not. We've gambled on the hills and in the valleys and on the sea-shore, and out of sight of land—mostly fair. Generally it's good enough. We began in Nicaragua first, after we left that schooner and her fool errand. There were one hundred and twenty-seven sovereigns and some Mexican dollars in that skipper's cash-box. Hardly enough to knock a man on the head for from behind, I must confess; but that the skipper had a narrow escape the governor himself could not deny afterwards.

“Do you want me to understand, sir, that you mind there being one life more or less on this earth?’ I asked him, a few hours after we got away.

“Certainly not,’ says he.

“Well, then, why did you stop me?’

“There's a proper way of doing things. You'll have to learn to be correct. There's also unnecessary exertion. That must be avoided, too—if only for the look of the thing.’ A gentleman's way of putting things to you—and no mistake!

“At sunrise we got into a creek, to lie hidden in case the treasure hunt party had a mind to take a spell hunting for us. And dash me if they didn't! We saw the schooner away out, running to leeward, with ten pairs of binoculars sweeping the sea, no doubt on all sides. I advised the governor to give her time to beat back again before we made a start. So we stayed up that creek something like ten days, as snug as can be. On the seventh day we had to kill a man, though—the brother of this Pedro here. They were alligator-hunters, right enough. We got our lodgings in their hut. Neither the boss nor I could habla Espanol—speak Spanish, you know—much then. Dry bank, nice shade, jolly hammocks, fresh fish, good game, everything lovely. The governor chucked them a few dollars to begin with; but it was like boarding with a pair of savage apes, anyhow. By and by we noticed them talking a lot together. They had twigged the cash-box, and the leather portmanteaus, and my bag—a jolly lot of plunder to look at. They must have been saying to each other:

“No one's ever likely to come looking for these two fellows, who seem to have fallen from the moon. Let's cut their throats.’

“Why, of course! Clear as daylight. I didn't need to spy one of them sharpening a devilish long knife behind some bushes, while glancing right and left with his wild eyes, to know what was in the wind. Pedro was standing by, trying the edge of another long knife. They thought we were away on our lookout at the mouth of the river, as was usual with us during the day. Not that we expected to see much of the schooner, but it was just as well to make certain, if possible; and then it was cooler out of the woods, in the breeze. Well, the governor was there right enough, lying comfortable on a rug, where he could watch the offing, but I had gone back to the hut to get a chew of tobacco out of my bag. I had not broken myself of the habit then, and I couldn't be happy unless I had a lump as big as a baby's fist in my cheek.”

At the cannibalistic comparison, Schomberg muttered a faint, sickly “don't.” Ricardo hitched himself up in his seat and glanced down his outstretched legs complacently.

“I am tolerably light on my feet, as a general thing,” he went on. “Dash me if I don't think I could drop a pinch of salt on a sparrow's tail, if I tried. Anyhow, they didn't hear me. I watched them two brown, hairy brutes not ten yards off. All they had on was white linen drawers rolled up on their thighs. Not a word they said to each other. Antonio was down on his thick hams, busy rubbing a knife on a flat stone; Pedro was leaning against a small tree and passing his thumb along the edge of his blade. I got away quieter than a mouse, you bet.”

“I didn't say anything to the boss then. He was leaning on his elbow on his rug, and didn't seem to want to be spoken to. He's like that—sometimes that familiar you might think he would eat out of your hand, and at others he would snub you sharper than a devil—but always quiet. Perfect gentleman, I tell you. I didn't bother him, then; but I wasn't likely to forget them two fellows, so businesslike with their knives. At that time we had only one revolver between us two—the governor's six-shooter, but loaded only in five chambers; and we had no more cartridges. He had left the box behind in a drawer in his cabin. Awkward! I had nothing but an old clasp-knife—no good at all for anything serious.

“In the evening we four sat round a bit of fire outside the sleeping-shed, eating broiled fish off plantain leaves, with roast yams for bread—the usual thing. The governor and I were on one side, and these two beauties cross-legged on the other, grunting a word or two to each other, now and then, hardly human speech at all, and their eyes down, fast on the ground. For the last three days we couldn't get them to look us in the face. Presently I began to talk to the boss quietly, just as I am talking to you now, careless like, and I told him all I had observed. He goes on picking up pieces of fish and putting them into his mouth as calm as

anything. It's a pleasure to have anything to do with a gentleman. Never looked across at them once.

“And now,' says I, yawning on purpose, 'we've got to stand watch at night, turn about, and keep our eyes skinned all day, too, and mind we don't get jumped upon suddenly.'

“It's perfectly intolerable,' says the governor. 'And you with no weapon of any sort!'

“I mean to stick pretty close to you, sir, from this on, if you don't mind,' says I.

“He just nods the least bit, wipes his fingers on the plantain leaf, puts his hand behind his back, as if to help himself to rise from the ground, snatches his revolver from under his jacket and plugs a bullet plumb centre into Mr. Antonio's chest. See what it is to have to do with a gentleman. No confounded fuss, and things done out of hand. But he might have tipped me a wink or something. I nearly jumped out of my skin. Scared ain't in it! I didn't even know who had fired. Everything had been so still just before that the bang of the shot seemed the loudest noise I had ever heard. The honourable Antonio pitches forward—they always do, towards the shot; you must have noticed that yourself—yes, he pitches forward on to the embers, and all that lot of hair on his face and head flashes up like a pinch of gunpowder. Greasy, I expect; always scraping the fat off them alligators' hides—”

“Look here,” exclaimed Schomberg violently, as if trying to burst some invisible bonds, “do you mean to say that all this happened?”

“No,” said Ricardo coolly. “I am making it all up as I go along, just to help you through the hottest part of the afternoon. So down he pitches his nose on the red embers, and up jumps our handsome Pedro and I at the same time, like two Jacks-in-the-box. He starts to bolt away, with his head over his shoulder, and I, hardly knowing what I was doing, spring on his back. I had the sense to get my hands round his neck at once, and it's about all I could do to lock my fingers tight under his jaw. You saw the beauty's neck, didn't you? Hard as iron, too. Down we both went. Seeing this the governor puts his revolver in his pocket.

“Tie his legs together, sir,' I yell. 'I'm trying to strangle him.'

“There was a lot of their fibre-lines lying about. I gave him a last squeeze and then got up.

“I might have shot you,' says the governor, quite concerned.

“But you are glad to have saved a cartridge, sir,' I tell him.

“My jump did save it. It wouldn't have done to let him get away in the dark like that, and have the beauty dodging around in the bushes, perhaps, with the rusty flint-lock gun they had. The governor owned up that the jump was the correct thing.

“But he isn't dead,' says he, bending over him.

“Might as well hope to strangle an ox. We made haste to tie his elbows back, and then, before he came to himself, we dragged him to a small tree, sat him up, and bound him to it, not by the waist but by the neck—some twenty turns of small line round his throat and the trunk, finished off with a reef-knot under his ear. Next thing we did was to attend to the honourable Antonio, who was making a great smell frizzling his face on the red coals. We pushed and rolled him into the creek, and left the rest to the alligators.

“I was tired. That little scrap took it out of me something awful. The governor hadn't turned a hair. That's where a gentleman has the pull of you. He don't get excited. No gentleman does—or hardly ever. I fell asleep all of a sudden and left him smoking by the fire I had made up, his railway rug round his legs, as calm as if he were sitting in a first-class carriage. We hardly spoke ten words to each other after it was over, and from that day to this we have never talked of the business. I wouldn't have known he remembered it if he hadn't alluded to it when talking with you the other day—you know, with regard to Pedro.”

“It surprised you, didn't it? That's why I am giving you this yarn of how he came to be with us, like a sort of dog—dashed sight more useful, though. You know how he can trot around with trays? Well, he could bring down an ox with his fist, at a word from the boss, just as cleverly. And fond of the governor! Oh, my word! More than any dog is of any man.”

Schomberg squared his chest.

“Oh, and that's one of the things I wanted to mention to Mr. Jones,” he said. “It's unpleasant to have that fellow round the house so early. He sits on the stairs at the back for hours before he is needed here, and frightens people so that the service suffers. The Chinamen—”

Ricardo nodded and raised his hand.

“When I first saw him he was fit to frighten a grizzly bear, let alone a Chinaman. He's become civilized now to what he once was. Well, that morning, first thing on opening my eyes, I saw him sitting there, tied up by the neck to the tree. He was blinking. We spent the day watching the sea, and we actually made out the schooner working to windward, which showed that she had given us up. Good! When the sun rose again, I took a squint at our Pedro. He wasn't blinking. He was rolling his eyes, all white one minute and black the next, and his tongue was hanging out a yard. Being tied up short by the neck like this would daunt the arch devil himself—in time—in time, mind! I don't know but that even a real gentleman would find it difficult to keep a stiff lip to the end. Presently we went to work getting our boat ready. I was busying myself setting up the mast, when the governor passes the remark:

“I think he wants to say something.’

“I had heard a sort of croaking going on for some time, only I wouldn't take any notice; but then I got out of the boat and went up to him, with some water. His eyes were red—red and black and half out of his head. He drank all the water I gave him, but he hadn't much to say for himself. I walked back to the governor.

“‘He asks for a bullet in his head before we go,’ I said. I wasn't at all pleased.

“‘Oh, that's out of the question altogether,’ says the governor.

“He was right there. Only four shots left, and ninety miles of wild coast to put behind us before coming to the first place where you could expect to buy revolver cartridges.

“‘Anyhow,’ I tells him, ‘he wants to be killed some way or other, as a favour.’

“And then I go on setting up the boat's mast. I didn't care much for the notion of butchering a man bound hand and foot and fastened by the neck besides. I had a knife then—the honourable Antonio's knife; and that knife is this knife.

“Ricardo gave his leg a resounding slap.

“First spoil in my new life,” he went on with harsh joviality. “The dodge of carrying it down there I learned later. I carried it stuck in my belt that day. No, I hadn't much stomach for the job; but when you work with a gentleman of the real right sort you may depend on your feelings being seen through your skin. Says the governor suddenly:

“‘It may even be looked upon as his right’—you hear a gentleman speaking there?—‘but what do you think of taking him with us in the boat?’

“And the governor starts arguing that the beggar would be useful in working our way along the coast. We could get rid of him before coming to the first place that was a little civilized. I didn't want much talking over. Out I scrambled from the boat.

“‘Ay, but will he be manageable, sir?’

“‘Oh, yes. He's daunted. Go on, cut him loose—I take the responsibility.’

“‘Right you are, sir.’

“He sees me come along smartly with his brother's knife in my hand—I wasn't thinking how it looked from his side of the fence, you know—and jiminy, it nearly killed him! He stared like a crazed bullock and began to sweat and twitch all over, something amazing. I was so surprised, that I stopped to look at him. The drops were pouring over his eyebrows, down his beard, off his nose—and he gurgled. Then it struck me that he couldn't see what was in my mind. By favour or by right he didn't like to die when it came to it; not in that way, anyhow. When I stepped round to get at the lashing, he let out a sort of soft bellow. Thought I was going to stick him from behind, I guess. I cut all the turns with one slash, and he went over on his side, flop, and started kicking with his tied legs. Laugh! I don't know what there was so funny about it, but I fairly shouted. What between

my laughing and his wriggling, I had a job in cutting him free. As soon as he could feel his limbs he makes for the bank, where the governor was standing, crawls up to him on his hands and knees, and embraces his legs. Gratitude, eh? You could see that being allowed to live suited that chap down to the ground. The governor gets his legs away from him gently and just mutters to me:

“Let's be off. Get him into the boat.”

“It was not difficult,” continued Ricardo, after eyeing Schomberg fixedly for a moment. “He was ready enough to get into the boat, and—here he is. He would let himself be chopped into small pieces—with a smile, mind; with a smile!—for the governor. I don't know about him doing that much for me; but pretty near, pretty near. I did the tying up and the untying, but he could see who was the boss. And then he knows a gentleman. A dog knows a gentleman—any dog. It's only some foreigners that don't know; and nothing can teach them, either.”

“And you mean to say,” asked Schomberg, disregarding what might have been annoying for himself in the emphasis of the final remark, “you mean to say that you left steady employment at good wages for a life like this?”

“There!” began Ricardo quietly. “That's just what a man like you would say. You are that tame! I follow a gentleman. That ain't the same thing as to serve an employer. They give you wages as they'd fling a bone to a dog, and they expect you to be grateful. It's worse than slavery. You don't expect a slave that's bought for money to be grateful. And if you sell your work—what is it but selling your own self? You've got so many days to live and you sell them one after another. Hey? Who can pay me enough for my life? Ay! But they throw at you your week's money and expect you to say 'thank you' before you pick it up.”

He mumbled some curses, directed at employers generally, as it seemed, then blazed out:

“Work be damned! I ain't a dog walking on its hind legs for a bone; I am a man who's following a gentleman. There's a difference which you will never understand, Mr. Tame Schomberg.”

He yawned slightly. Schomberg, preserving a military stiffness reinforced by a slight frown, had allowed his thoughts to stray away. They were busy detailing the image of a young girl—absent—gone—stolen from him. He became enraged. There was that rascal looking at him insolently. If the girl had not been shamefully decoyed away from him, he would not have allowed anyone to look at him insolently. He would have made nothing of hitting that rogue between the eyes. Afterwards he would have kicked the other without hesitation. He saw himself doing it; and in sympathy with this glorious vision Schomberg's right foot, and arm moved convulsively.

At this moment he came out of his sudden reverie to note with alarm the wide-awake curiosity of Mr. Ricardo's stare.

“And so you go like this about the world, gambling,” he remarked inanely, to cover his confusion. But Ricardo's stare did not change its character, and he continued vaguely:

“Here and there and everywhere.” He pulled himself together, squared his shoulders. “Isn't it very precarious?” he said firmly.

The word precarious—seemed to be effective, because Ricardo's eyes lost their dangerously interested expression.

“No, not so bad,” Ricardo said, with indifference. “It's my opinion that men will gamble as long as they have anything to put on a card. Gamble? That's nature. What's life itself? You never know what may turn up. The worst of it is that you never can tell exactly what sort of cards you are holding yourself. What's trumps?—that is the question. See? Any man will gamble if only he's given a chance, for anything or everything. You too—”

“I haven't touched a card now for twenty years,” said Schomberg in an austere tone.

“Well, if you got your living that way you would be no worse than you are now, selling drinks to people—beastly beer and spirits, rotten stuff fit to make an old he-goat yell if you poured it down its throat. Pooh! I can't stand the confounded liquor. Never could. A whiff of neat brandy in a glass makes me feel sick. Always did. If everybody was like me, liquor would be going a-begging. You think it's funny in a man, don't you?”

Schomberg made a vague gesture of toleration. Ricardo hitched up his chair and settled his elbow afresh on the table.

“French siros I must say I do like. Saigon's the place for them. I see you have siros in the bar. Hang me if I ain't getting dry, conversing like this with you. Come, Mr. Schomberg, be hospitable, as the governor says.”

Schomberg rose and walked with dignity to the counter. His footsteps echoed loudly on the floor of polished boards. He took down a bottle, labelled “Sirop de Groseille.” The little sounds he made, the clink of glass, the gurgling of the liquid, the pop of the soda-water cork had a preternatural sharpness. He came back carrying a pink and glistening tumbler. Mr. Ricardo had followed his movements with oblique, coyly expectant yellow eyes, like a cat watching the preparation of a saucer of milk, and the satisfied sound after he had drunk might have been a slightly modified form of purring, very soft and deep in his throat. It affected Schomberg unpleasantly as another example of something inhuman in those men wherein lay the difficulty of dealing with them. A spectre, a cat, an ape—there was a pretty association for a mere man to remonstrate with, he reflected with an inward shudder; for Schomberg had been overpowered, as it were, by his imagination, and his reason could not react against that fanciful view of his guests. And it was not only their appearance. The morals of Mr. Ricardo

seemed to him to be pretty much the morals of a cat. Too much. What sort of argument could a mere man offer to a . . . or to a spectre, either! What the morals of a spectre could be, Schomberg had no idea. Something dreadful, no doubt. Compassion certainly had no place in them. As to the ape—well, everybody knew what an ape was. It had no morals. Nothing could be more hopeless.

Outwardly, however, having picked up the cigar which he had laid aside to get the drink, with his thick fingers, one of them ornamented by a gold ring, Schomberg smoked with moody composure. Facing him, Ricardo blinked slowly for a time, then closed his eyes altogether, with the placidity of the domestic cat dozing on the hearth-rug. In another moment he opened them very wide, and seemed surprised to see Schomberg there.

“You're having a very slack time today, aren't you?” he observed. “But then this whole town is confoundedly slack, anyhow; and I've never faced such a slack party at a table before. Come eleven o'clock, they begin to talk of breaking up. What's the matter with them? Want to go to bed so early, or what?”

“I reckon you don't lose a fortune by their wanting to go to bed,” said Schomberg, with sombre sarcasm.

“No,” admitted Ricardo, with a grin that stretched his thin mouth from ear to ear, giving a sudden glimpse of his white teeth. “Only, you see, when I once start, I would play for nuts, for parched peas, for any rubbish. I would play them for their souls. But these Dutchmen aren't any good. They never seem to get warmed up properly, win or lose. I've tried them both ways, too. Hang them for a beggarly, bloodless lot of animated cucumbers!”

“And if anything out of the way was to happen, they would be just as cool in locking you and your gentleman up,” Schomberg snarled unpleasantly.

“Indeed!” said Ricardo slowly, taking Schomberg's measure with his eyes. “And what about you?”

“You talk mighty big,” burst out the hotel-keeper. “You talk of ranging all over the world, and doing great things, and taking fortune by the scruff of the neck, but here you stick at this miserable business!”

“It isn't much of a lay—that's a fact,” admitted Ricardo unexpectedly.

Schomberg was red in the face with audacity.

“I call it paltry,” he spluttered.

“That's how it looks. Can't call it anything else.” Ricardo seemed to be in an accommodating mood. “I should be ashamed of it myself, only you see the governor is subject to fits—”

“Fits!” Schomberg cried out, but in a low tone. “You don't say so!” He exulted inwardly, as if this disclosure had in some way diminished the difficulty of the

situation. "Fits! That's a serious thing, isn't it? You ought to take him to the civil hospital—a lovely place."

Ricardo nodded slightly, with a faint grin.

"Serious enough. Regular fits of laziness, I call them. Now and then he lays down on me like this, and there's no moving him. If you think I like it, you're a long way out. Generally speaking, I can talk him over. I know how to deal with a gentleman. I am no daily-bread slave. But when he has said, 'Martin, I am bored,' then look out! There's nothing to do but to shut up, confound it!"

Schomberg, very much cast down, had listened open-mouthed.

"What's the cause of it?" he asked. "Why is he like this? I don't understand."

"I think I do," said Ricardo. "A gentleman, you know, is not such a simple person as you or I; and not so easy to manage, either. If only I had something to lever him out with!"

"What do you mean, to lever him out with?" muttered Schomberg hopelessly.

Ricardo was impatient with this denseness.

"Don't you understand English? Look here! I couldn't make this billiard table move an inch if I talked to it from now till the end of days—could I? Well, the governor is like that, too, when the fits are on him. He's bored. Nothing's worthwhile, nothing's good enough, that's mere sense. But if I saw a capstan bar lying about here, I would soon manage to shift that billiard table of yours a good many inches. And that's all there is to it."

He rose noiselessly, stretched himself, supple and stealthy, with curious sideways movements of his head and unexpected elongations of his thick body, glanced out of the corners of his eyes in the direction of the door, and finally leaned back against the table, folding his arms on his breast comfortably, in a completely human attitude.

"That's another thing you can tell a gentleman by—his freakishness. A gentleman ain't accountable to nobody, any more than a tramp on the roads. He ain't got to keep time. The governor got like this once in a one-horse Mexican pueblo on the uplands, away from everywhere. He lay all day long in a dark room—"

"Drunk?" This word escaped Schomberg by inadvertence at which he became frightened. But the devoted secretary seemed to find it natural.

"No, that never comes on together with this kind of fit. He just lay there full length on a mat, while a ragged, bare-legged boy that he had picked up in the street sat in the patio, between two oleanders near the open door of his room, strumming on a guitar and singing tristes to him from morning to night. You know tristes—twang, twang, twang, aouh, hoo! Chroo, yah!"

Schomberg uplifted his hands in distress. This tribute seemed to flatter Ricardo. His mouth twitched grimly.

“Like that—enough to give colic to an ostrich, eh? Awful. Well, there was a cook there who loved me—an old fat, Negro woman with spectacles. I used to hide in the kitchen and turn her to, to make me dulces—sweet things, you know, mostly eggs and sugar—to pass the time away. I am like a kid for sweet things. And, by the way, why don't you ever have a pudding at your tablydott, Mr. Schomberg? Nothing but fruit, morning, noon, and night. Sickening! What do you think a fellow is—a wasp?”

Schomberg disregarded the injured tone.

“And how long did that fit, as you call it, last?” he asked anxiously.

“Weeks, months, years, centuries, it seemed to me,” returned Mr. Ricardo with feeling. “Of an evening the governor would stroll out into the sala and fritter his life away playing cards with the juez of the place—a little Dago with a pair of black whiskers—ekarty, you know, a quick French game, for small change. And the comandante, a one-eyed, half-Indian, flat-nosed ruffian, and I, we had to stand around and bet on their hands. It was awful!”

“Awful,” echoed Schomberg, in a Teutonic throaty tone of despair. “Look here, I need your rooms.”

“To be sure. I have been thinking that for some time past,” said Ricardo indifferently.

“I was mad when I listened to you. This must end!”

“I think you are mad yet,” said Ricardo, not even unfolding his arms or shifting his attitude an inch. He lowered his voice to add: “And if I thought you had been to the police, I would tell Pedro to catch you round the waist and break your fat neck by jerking your head backward—snap! I saw him do it to a big buck nigger who was flourishing a razor in front of the governor. It can be done. You hear a low crack, that's all—and the man drops down like a limp rag.”

Not even Ricardo's head, slightly inclined on the left shoulder, had moved; but when he ceased the greenish irises which had been staring out of doors glided into the corners of his eyes nearest to Schomberg and stayed there with a coyly voluptuous expression.