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‘Why do you ask?’

‘Because I am getting tired of doing without it. A thousand times since I sold it to you I have wished I could undo the bargain. I can’t bear idleness. Will you sell?’

‘I might,’ said Racksole, ‘I might be induced to sell.’

‘What will you take, my friend?’ asked Félix.

‘What I gave,’ was the quick answer.

‘Eh!’ Félix exclaimed. ‘I sell you my hotel with Jules, with Rocco, with Miss Spencer. You go and lose all those three inestimable servants, and then offer me the hotel without them at the same price! It is monstrous.’ The little man laughed heartily at his own wit. ‘Nevertheless,’ he added, ‘we will not quarrel about the price. I accept your terms.’

And so was brought to a close the complex chain of events which had begun when Theodore Racksole ordered a steak and a bottle of Bass at the table d’hôte of the Grand Babylon Hotel.

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