

"I'd go to Abrahams and take his offer." She uttered this sentence slowly, so as to give full emphasis to each word.

It seemed as if she had summoned an evil spirit to her elbow; for, as she spoke, a low tap came to the door, and in obedience to an order to come in, an old, unreverend man entered the apartment. Hideously ugly, with features of the most pronounced Hebrew type, Lewis Abrahams stood the incarnation of human subtlety.

"Goot morning, ma tears," was his salutation.

Bella jumped up, and eagerly welcomed him.

"Goot morning, Mr. Macfarlane," continued the Jew, suffering himself to be relieved by Bella of his hat and stick, and seating himself by the fire.

"And how is it mit you to-day, my fine gentlemen?"

"Abrahams," said Harold, turning savagely to his visitor, "when I look at you I can almost lead myself to believe in the existence upon earth of a devil."

"Ha, ha, ba!" laughed the Jew, rubbing his hands, and chuckling at the joke.

"I could You come at a time when my mind is distempered by trouble to put temptation before me, and you *are* so infernally ugly."

"Oh, vat a merry gentlemen," said Abrahams in actual glee at the compliment, "why how you talk, and me not spoken a word this blessed mornin'."

"Not spoken—no, but you look it; your very eyes, man, tell your tale. Drop all your humbug, and come to the point at once."

"Vell, then, look you now, you owe me von hundred and seventy poundsh."

"Of which I never had forty."

"No, no, but you owe it me—von hundred and seventy poundsh."

"Well?"

"Vell! but it ish not vell. You have not paid me my moneysh, and I must have it."

"If you can get it."

"But, ma tear young friend, I will get it. Now, look you, I don't vant to be hard on such a nice young gentlemen and his beautiful lady"—here a bow and a smile to Bella, who acknowledged the compliment with an expressive shrug—"but I must have my moneysh."

"Drive me! hound me on, curse you!" cried Harold, starting up in a frenzy of excitement, "but, do what you will, I won't have anything to do with that villanous document you are always harping upon. There! I see it sticking out of your pocket; take it away, man, hide it, burn it, don't try to tempt me with it, or I'll beat your shrivelled old carcase to a mummy!" He got up and sat down again in his passion, and then gloomily stared at the fire.

"Why, look you how you storm! And see vot a little bit of writing it is to make such a bobbery about. Vell, vell, if you vo'nt, you vo'nt young mans, so I'll just lay it on the mantel-piece, and call again as I come back from the City." So saying he took his departure, Bella following him into the passage, where an earnest whispering ensued between the two.