

my intention to inflict any of my troubles, or even my company, if unwelcome, upon you. Being myself a gentleman of some birth and learning, I recognised in you, at a glance, a kindred spirit, a partner in mental attainments, if I may be allowed the familiarity of the expression, and therefore I ventured to address you, believing that the pleasure which I should certainly have felt had you thought fit to open the acquaintance would be entertained by you also."

These words were honey to the soul of Soady. The speaker's delightful accent, his precise periods, punctuated by the cold, masterful smile, which proclaimed him to be a man strong-minded and independent, were links in the chain which held the book-keeper captive from that hour. He entreated Krum to come home with him. He gave him supper, bringing out his best when he found that this calm, opinionative gentleman, who quoted Greek and Latin upon occasion, had no difficulty in agreeing with his own deep-rooted and narrow sentiments upon religion and socialism. He wrung himself like a sponge to squeeze out smatterings of knowledge. The two men could have shaken hands with each other after every statement.

The book-keeper regarded smoking as a nauseous habit; but when they had eaten, and Mrs. Soady had been obliterated, the host explained that he would gladly waive his objections and willingly suffer himself to be asphyxiated by the strongest narcotic fumes. Whereupon Krum knitted his brows, and after thoughtfully tapping his chin with the apex of two finely-chiselled fingers, gravely stated that he had given the matter his earnest consideration in the