

"I'm obliged to you for asking. Our virtuous friends are so ready to take a felony for granted, that it seems never to have occurred to them that I walked in at the door—partly to see you—chiefly to bowl them out." Lady Vera could not help smiling at that which seemed never to have occurred to her; nothing else left any mark, save upon John Dollar, on whom Scarth now trained his ivory grin. "The worst of a Yale lock, doctor," he went on, "is that all the keys are numbered; the worst of a Turkish bath is that your enemy may do that thing, and have a look at your latch-key if you will leave it in your pocket on its chain. Northumberland Avenue may be a good place after a bad night, but that's where I really found my way into your house. You didn't see me because I had the bad taste to prefer the cave of electricity to the public hot-rooms and your capital company."

The note of insolence had been forced for Croucher's benefit, the libretto elaborated to impress that elemental mind, and it was to Croucher that Scarth turned for applause. It might have been more articulate; there was little merriment in the guttural laugh; and it was not in open mockery,