

he perceived, as he passed slowly and alone by her residence, a figure emerging from the familiar doorway. He paused to let it precede him on the opposite side of the street. The step, the carriage, the height proclaimed it to be Gomez, who, as it afterwards transpired, had spent the evening with Agnes' father—a gentleman who spoke Spanish fluently and courted the society of those who could converse with him in that language. This visit to the house of the beloved one, so soon after the rupture of which he assumed his unconscious rival must have been aware, had, in jaundiced eyes, an exaggerated significance. Beside himself with rage, he rushed across the street to assail Gomez who, hearing the rapid steps behind him and in the darkness not recognising his pursuer, ran to avoid an encounter with one who might have accomplices. From his imperfect knowledge of some of the streets, he fled towards a solitary quarter of the town in the vicinity of the strand, but before reaching the water's edge he heard a voice hoarse with passion, yet strangely familiar, call out, "Stop, traitor, and draw; you cannot escape thus!"

Puzzled, first, at the tone in which the challenge was given then, the fire of his Spanish nature in a blaze at the insulting epithet flung at him, he drew his sword and turned upon his fierce pursuer. At the same moment, a swaying ship's light cast its beam on the face of his assailant. Livid and transformed with rage as were the features, yet Gomez instantly recognized him. It was none other than his friend and comrade—now unaccountably changed into his avowed enemy—Walter Lynch! But there was no time to express surprise or ask for explanation, for

the Galwegian wildly crying out, "Take that for treachery and abused hospitality," made a fearful lunge at him with his sword. Agitated as Gomez was by the suddenness and ferocity of the attack, he showed his skill as a fencer in dexterously parrying the thrust. Loath as he was to think it, he yet felt that there was now nothing for it but a duel to the death. Lynch, on his side, although not a tyro at the sword and having the advantage of the aggressor, was notwithstanding in his worst form. Passion, which shook his every nerve, had deprived him of that self-possession and sureness of eye so essential in consummate fencing. Many of his thrusts fell wide of the mark. A cut on the sword-arm, however, brought him somewhat to his senses, and thence-forward lunge and parry were executed with his usual skill. The spot on which the combat took place was a lonely one, just between the dock and the last house on the straggling street which, occupied exclusively by families of fishermen, terminated only a few yards from high-water mark. At night,—particularly if the hour was advanced as it was when young Gomez took leave of his hospitable host,—this street, unlighted save by the stray beams from the beacon of some vessel lying at the dock a couple of hundred yards away, was deserted, being from the brawls among sailors returning to their ships at night, considered unsafe. Hence it happened that there were no eye-witnesses of the duel. In the dark of a starless sky and out of hearing of the nearest human beings, the blades flashed, met and struck out the sparks of their finely tempered steel. The pace of the combat was so rapid and its nature so desperate that scarce a word was exchanged