

the feeling to creep upward until it betrayed itself visibly, peeping here and there from beneath the cloak of his habitual reserve and phlegm. The American, looking at the other shrewdly, surmised that the officer, who had risen so high and had accomplished so much, had an under-burden of care.

"See here, Hamilton," he said, addressing the kaid for the first time by the given name, and resting a hand on the soldier's shoulder, "I won't bother you with my affairs. I reckon there's somethin' worryin' you. I like you. You're on the square, all right. I've found that out, so I don't blame you for not bein' able to help me through with somethin' I've set my head on, and —" the consul banged one closed fist into the receptive palm of the other hand — "somethin' I'm goin' to make good on before I stop!"

The officer looked at the consul, wondering what had caused this outburst of impatience in one usually so self-contained. This gray-eyed giant, old enough to be his father, was a perpetual study to him, and, too, despite the brusqueness of manner, was a constant cause of admiration. Now, for the first time, Hamilton Clarke felt that he had been invited by this strong, elemental man to give confidence for confidence, and his reserve was slowly and unexpectedly melting away. He felt himself a youth beside this man who was so wise and fearless, yet so out of place in the position into which he had been thrust. Notwithstanding, it was difficult for the kaid to talk.

"I came here a good many years ago," he said at last, looking at his feet and absently tugging his short-