

is, I might get more for it, but I have no intention of offering it to everybody. I would like to ask your careful attention for a minute or two, Mr. Austin."

He stopped a moment, and his tone had changed when he proceeded. "There is nothing to be gained by hiding the fact that I am getting old, and I begin to feel that I would like to take my life a little more easily," he said. "Indeed, I want somebody I could have confidence in to do the hardest work for me. I made the business—and I am a little proud of it. It would not please me to let go of it altogether—and, as a matter of fact, I have been warned that if I retired to England, the climate would probably shorten my life for me. You are, perhaps, aware that I came out to the Canaries originally because my constitution is not an excellent one."

He stopped again, and added, with a certain significance: "I have, however, been told that my ailments are not likely to prove hereditary. Well, as I mentioned, I do not want to give the business up entirely, and it would be a matter of grief to me to see it go to pieces in the hands of an incompetent manager. That is why I have made you the offer."

Austin met his gaze steadily, though the flush was still in his face. "I scarcely think anybody would call me an enterprising business man, that is, at least, from the conventional English point of view."

Brown chuckled softly. "I believe you know as well as I do that a man of that kind would not be of the least use in Spain. They would drive him crazy, and he would probably have insulted half his clients past forgiveness before he had been a month among them. Now, you understand the Spaniards, and, what is as much to the purpose, they seem to like you."

Austin sat still, looking at him, and at last he saw that