

SHORT STORY 4 HEARTS AND HANDS

EXTRACT I

Q: Which coach is referred to in the extract? How can you conclude that the coach was crowded?

(i) The coach of the eastbound train, B. & M. Express. The only vacant seat left was a "reversed one facing the attractive young woman." This tells us that the coach was crowded.

Q: Name the young woman in the coach. What is said about her just before the extract?

(ii) Miss Fairchild. She is described as an elegantly dressed, pretty young woman who had all the luxuries and who loved travelling.

Q: Which linked couple is referred to in the extract above? In what way were they linked?

(iii) Mr. Easton and the marshal because they were handcuffed together.

Q: Describe the reaction of the young woman on seeing the two men.

(iv) At first, she saw them indifferently with a "distant, swift disinterest". As soon as she recognised Mr. Easton, she smiled at them and started conversing.

Q: What is revealed from the extract about the young woman's nature? What was the relationship between Mr. Easton and the young woman?

(v) The young woman appears to be:

- flirtations—as soon as she recognised Easton there appeared a glow on her face and she spoke in a sweet voice
- arrogant—she spoke as if she "accustomed to speak and be heard".

They were old acquaintances.

EXTRACT II

Q: Who said, "It's Miss Fairchild"? Which hand of his was engaged? How?

(i) Mr. Easton. His right hand was engaged as it was handcuffed to the left hand of the marshal.

Q: Why did the young lady's look change to were seen in her due to the horror? What changes were seen in her due to the horror?

(ii) As soon as the lady saw Mr. Easton being handcuffed, her look changed to bewildered horror. She was no longer glad; "the glow faded from her cheeks" and "her lips parted in a vague, relaxing distress".

Q: What did the glum-faced man say about the marshal? As per the context here where was the glum-faced man being taken? Why?

(iii) The glum-faced man spoke as if Mr. Easton was the marshal. The glum-faced man was a convict being taken to Leavenworth prison for counterfeiting.

Q: With reference to question (ii) above explain what happened in reality.

(iv) In reality, the glum-faced man was the marshal who was taking the convict Mr. Easton to the prison. The marshal, to save Mr. Easton from embarrassment in front of Miss Fairchild, presented himself as the convict.

Q: Explain the significance of 'hands' in the story. What role do the eavesdroppers play in the story?

(v) The story begins with two people, Mr. Easton and the glum-faced man hand-cuffed together.

It is the handcuffing that lends to the 'Hands' part of the title. In fact, it is the hands which are significant for revealing the true identities of the two men.

One of the eavesdropping passenger corrected the other by saying that Mr. Easton was not the marshal and that the other man was actually the marshal has no marshal would handcuff his right hand to the prisoner's hand.

EXTRACT III

Q: Why did Miss Fairchild call Easton, a marshal? What was he in reality? Explain the meaning of returning color, with reference to Miss Fairchild's behaviour.

(i) She called Easton, a marshal because she was told so by the real marshal. Easton, in reality, was a convict being taken to a prison on charges of counterfeiting.

When Miss Fairchild first saw Easton she got a red glow in her cheeks that vanished when she saw the handcuffs. The returning colour is the red glow that returned on her face when she was told that Easton was a marshal.

Q: Explain the verbal irony in the statement, "I had to do something". What opening did Easton see in the West?

(ii) Verbal irony happens when characters is one thing and its meaning is entirely different. " I had to do something." This sentence is an example of verbal irony, since Mr. Easton did not want Miss Fairchild to understand what the 'something' truly was. It can be inferred that Easton saw an opening in counterfeiting operations in the west.

Q: What is Easton hinting at while saying that 'marshalship isn't quite as high a position as that of ambassador'?

(iii) Easton is hinting at the close association of Miss Fairchild with the ambassador at Washington.

Q: What did Fairchild say about Easton's life in Washington? Why was she not likely to see Easton in Washington soon?

(iv) She was not likely to see Easton in Washington soon, because he was to be confined in Leavenworth prison. Miss Fairchild, assumed that he would be extremely busy in his new job as the marshal.

Q: Give the meaning of: a) Money has a way of taking wings unto itself.

(b) to keep step with our crowd in Washington.

(v) (a) Money has the ability to make one feel respected and dignified. Money can make one fly and soar high.

(b) To compete with the crowd or to feel one with the high class society in Washington.

EXTRACT IV

Q: Why were the girl's eyes fascinated? Who were handcuffed? Why?

i) The girl was fascinated with the handcuffs. Easton was handcuffed to the marshal, because he was being taken to the prison for counterfeiting.

Q: Why did the glum-faced man say, "Mr. Easton knows his business"?

(ii) Miss Fairchild glaring at the handcuffs The glum faced marretsted her not to worry as it was Mr. Easton business as a marshal to handcuff the convict (the glum-faced man) to keep him from getting away.

Q: What kind of relationship existed between Mr. Easton and Miss Fairchild?

(iii) The word Hearts' in the title is indicative a relationship something more than friendship between Miss Fairchild and Mr. Easton. When she saw Mr. Easton, there appeared a lovely smile on her face and her cheeks turned pink. She even told him that she loved the West, suggesting that she would settle down with him in the West.

Q: Why won't Easton be in Washington in the near future? What is meant by, "My butterfly days are over"?

(iv) Mr. Easton would be imprisoned in Leavenworth prison on the charges of counterfeiting. "My butterfly days are over" signifies that Easton's good and adventures days of making money by deceiving people are over.

Q: How is the mistaken identity used in the plot of the story? Give examples to support your answer.

(v) O.Henry has artfully depicted in the story that appearances can miss represent reality. When the Marshall and Convict boarded the train their physical appearances are described in such a way that it later misled not only Miss Fairchild but also the reader.

Mr. Easton is described as one of the handsome presents while the other is is referred as heavy built ,roughly dressed and glum faced. So when the real marshal tells Miss Fairchild that he is the convict who is being taken to prison by Mr. Easton who is a marshal it appears to be true.

EXTRACT V

Q: What did the glum-faced man do to cut short the conversation between Easton and Miss Fairchild? What could be the reason for his action?

(i) The glum faced man interrupted the conversation between Easton and Miss Fairchild and requested Easton that he should be taken to the smoker room.

Q: What reason did the glum-faced man give for his going for a smoke? What was the real reason for his going there?

(ii) The glum-faced man said he was in need of a drink and a smoke. The real reason was to prevent Mr. Easton from giving away the truth.

Q: Do you like the way the story ends? Give reasons to justify your opinion.

(iii) Yes, the story ends with the surprise. O Henry is best known for the surprise endings in short stories, having invariably a sting in the tail. In the story we believed that the young man Mr Easton is the marshal and the glum faced man is the convict . In the end of the story we came to know that we were wrong about them as their appearance deceived us .

Q: What role does the 'heart' play in the plot of the story?

(iv) It is the 'hearts' part of the title that explains the theme. It is because of having a compassionate heart that the marshal told a lie to Miss Fairchild. He did this to save Mr Easton from the humiliation of being identified as a convict in front of an old friend. He told Miss Fairchild that Mr. Easton was the marshal and he was the convict, who was being taken to the prison by Mr. Easton. The glum-faced man had golden heart. The effect of the lie was immediate in the response of Miss Fairchild. She showed relief that Mr. Easton was not convicted. She was shocked and horrified before the marshal told the lie to her.

Q: Which hand of an officer is handcuffed to the hand of the convict? Why is this information necessary to end the story? Who gives this information to the reader?

(v) Generally, an officer's left hand is handcuffed to the right hand (v) of the convict. The information is necessary to end the story as it reveals that in reality Easton was the convict and the glum-faced man was the marshal. The eavesdroppers give this information to the reader ending the story surprisingly with a "Sting in the Tail"