

## Context Questions

I. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

As they passed down the aisle of the coach the only vacant seat offered was a reversed one facing the attractive young woman. Here the linked couple seated themselves. The young woman's glance fell upon them with a distant, swift disinterest; then with a lovely smile brightening her countenance and a tender pink tingeing her rounded cheeks, she held out a little gray-gloved hand. When she spoke her voice, full, sweet, and deliberate, proclaimed that its owner was accustomed to speak and be heard.

- (i) Which coach is referred to in the extract? How can you conclude that the coach was crowded?

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(ii) Name the young woman in the coach. What is said about her just before the extract?

(iii) Which *linked couple* is referred to in the extract above? In what way were they linked?

(iv) Describe the reaction of the young woman on seeing the two men.

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

**II. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:**

"It's Miss Fairchild," he said, with a smile. "I'll ask you to excuse the other hand; "it's otherwise engaged just at present."

He slightly raised his right hand, bound at the wrist by the shining "bracelet" to the left one of his companion. The glad look in the girl's eyes slowly changed to a bewildered horror. The glow faded from her cheeks. Her lips parted in a vague, relaxing distress. Easton, with a little laugh, as if amused, was about to speak again when the other forestalled him. The glum-faced man had been watching the girl's countenance with veiled glances from his keen, shrewd eyes.

(i) Who said, "It's Miss Fairchild"? Which hand of his was engaged? How?

(ii) Why did the young lady's look change to bewildered horror? What changes were seen in her due to the horror?

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

(iv) With reference to question (iii) above explain what happened in reality.

(v) Explain the significance of 'hands' in the story. What role do the eavesdroppers play in the story?

**III. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:**

"Oh!" said the girl, with a deep breath and returning color. "So that is what you are doing out here? A marshal!"

"My dear Miss Fairchild," said Easton, calmly, "I had to do something. Money has a way of taking wings unto itself, and you know it takes money to keep step with our crowd in Washington. I saw this opening in the West, and — well, a marshalship isn't quite as high a position as that of ambassador, but—"

(i) 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.

(ii) Explain the verbal irony in the statement, "*I had to do something*". What opening did Easton see in the West?

(iii) ✓ What is Easton hinting at while saying that 'marshalship isn't quite as high a position as that of ambassador'?

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

(v) ✓ Give the meaning of:

(a) *Money has a way of taking wings unto itself.*

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

**IV. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:**

The girl's eyes, fascinated, went back, widening a little, to rest upon the glittering handcuffs.

“Don’t you worry about them, miss,” said the other man. “All marshals handcuff themselves to their prisoners to keep them from getting away. Mr. Easton knows his business.”

“Will we see you again soon in Washington?” asked the girl.

“Not soon, I think,” said Easton. “My butterfly days are over, I fear.”

(i) Why were the girl’s eyes fascinated? Who were handcuffed? Why?

(ii) Why did the glum-faced man say, “Mr. Easton knows his business”?

(iii) What kind of relationship existed between Mr. Easton and Miss Fairchild?

(iv) Why won’t Easton be in Washington in the near future? What is meant by, “My butterfly days are over”?

- (v) How is the mistaken identity used in the plot of the story? Give examples to support your answer.

**V. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow.**

The two men sidled down the aisle into the smoker.

The two passengers in a seat nearby had heard most of the conversation. Said one of them: "That marshal's a good sort of chap. Some of these Western fellows are all right."

"Pretty young to hold an office like that, isn't he?" asked the other.

"Young!" exclaimed the first speaker. "why—Oh! didn't you catch on? Say—did you ever know an officer to handcuff a prisoner to his right hand?"

- (i) 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?

- (ii) What reason did the glum-faced man give for his going for a smoke? What was the real reason for his going there?

(iii) Do you like the way the story ends? Give reasons to justify your opinion.

(iv) ✓ What role does the 'heart' play in the plot of the story?

(v) ✓ 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?