

## A MISSION FULFILLED

CHAPTER XXXV.  
A Gambling Transaction.

Lord Teasdale, perhaps, might have been astonished to hear that his wife's favorite, Gordon Hatherley, was a member of the "Rory O'More." Gordon was something of a behemoth, not to say comportsman, and was one of those men who like to have a finger in every pie, but rarely to insert it deeply. Hence it came about that though he had, perhaps, as large a circle of acquaintances as any man in town, he had scarcely one intimate friend; also that, although taking part more or less in every social project or undertaking, he rarely became deeply involved in any one of them.

"You are a most unsatisfactory person," Lady Teasdale once said to him. "You have so many irons in and out of the fire that not one of them has ever had time to get hot. One expects more from you than from other people because you are cleverer; but one gets less because you are so promiscuous."

He was a member of artistic, philanthropic, and debating societies, a patron of the turf in a mild way, and a generous supporter of East End charities (this latter fact, however, being unknown to most of his friends); of tendencies partly scientific, partly metaphysical; of roving and multifarious tastes. No one could deny his talents; but everyone was not aware that beneath the quick, half-sarcastic manner and keen wit lay a heart tender as a child's, nor that a high moral standard, veiled by natural reserve, made him a severe critic upon the society in which he mixed, and a contemptuous observer in many places where he was welcomed as an agreeable sympathizer.

Notwithstanding his bohemian ways and his occasionally eccentric acts, Hatherley was of a fastidious disposition, and from this fact, perhaps, it came about that the few who knew him intimately or possessed his unreserved friendship were women—generally women attractive and clever, but somewhat older than himself. Among these, prominent was Lady Teasdale, who ranked second only to Margherita in his estimation. Lady Teasdale, on her part, had the highest opinion of her friend; she had often seen through the outer coating of his reserve and knew him to be honorable and upright above the average. She believed his friend-

ship for and admiration of any married woman to be both safe toward his object and beneficial to himself; and, although, when giving Margherita her word of warning last season, she had for a moment feared that Gordon, for the first time since she had known him, was losing his head, she had since convinced herself that this was not the case, and that his devotion need in no way affect Margherita's self respect.

Since then he had boldly accused her of interference at that time, and she had as boldly admitted the fact.

"Did you think so badly of me?" he asked, hotly, "as to imagine that I should ever say or do anything she could resent?"

"No," she replied, quietly, "I don't think I did. I know you, Gordon, and I know her. But all the world does not. And we have to live for the world, not only for ourselves. Would your good motives have put you perfectly at your ease if you found them misconstrued by others?"

He was silent, and she knew that she had said enough.

It was not, perhaps, very often that Gordon Hatherley patronized the Rory O'More; but, a few evenings after the events related in the last two chapters, he might have been seen, cigar in mouth, in the smoking-room of the club.

His apparently vague movements had frequently more purpose in them than was guessed by his friends; and on this occasion he probably had a desire to possess himself of the latest club gossip regarding Keith Ronaldson. No one knew better than himself, when necessary, how to lead conversation round to a desired topic without apparent attention; but, upon the present occasion, there was no necessity to employ any arts of the kind.

He had not been many minutes smoking before the talk turned upon the events of the cardroom; and one member, a somewhat garrulous, heavy-brained young fellow, took the opportunity to complain openly of his ill-luck in being the possessor of so much bad money of Ronaldson's.

"It's too bad," he grumbled, in the pauses of his pipe. "I knew they were then me. But now I hear he's talking of leaving the country; in which case they won't be worth the value of the paper they're written on. I don't know what you other fellows think of it, but I call it uncommon shady conduct. I never failed to redeem an I O U in my life."

"But then, you see, Ringwood," remarked a more charitably disposed neighbor, "the wherewithal has probably never failed you; whereas they say this poor devil is head over ears in debt."

"And so runs away from his creditors," replied the first. "Well, it is to be hoped he doesn't mean to show his nose in here again. He won't find fellows very anxious to mix with one of his sort."

"What's the value of the papers, may I ask?" inquired Hatherley, carelessly. "They're for three hundred. Their value?" By Jove! if Ronaldson leaves England, I'd sell them to any man for a fiver."

"Look here," said Hatherley. "Let's try luck. I'll toss you for them. If I win, a century and the papers; if you win, a couple of centuries to you."

"Not a bad bargain for Ringwood," observed one of the smokers, grinning. Everyone, however, was used to Hatherley's odd ways, and no one expressed astonishment, although several were listening to the conversation. As for Ringwood, if Hatherley chose to make a fool of himself, all the better for him; he was not one of those sensitive-minded persons who refuse to make capital out of a comrade's folly.

"All right," he said, "I am willing." "Go ahead, then," said Hatherley. "Have you got the papers with you?"

Ringwood nodded, and the men in the room looked on with a languid interest as the toss took place.

"Heads," Ringwood said, "Hatherley. Heads—tails—heads. Hand over the two centuries, Hatherley."

"In a moment," said the young man, unperturbed. "One more, Ringwood. Double or quits?"

"All right," returned the other. "And this time it came 'tails,' and Ringwood, who was not as easy-going as his companion, looked a trifle blue.

"Squared as to cash," remarked Hatherley, coolly, "and the papers mine."

"Ain't you going to have a third try?" asked a big, burly man beside Hatherley.

"As many as Ringwood likes, at this rate," he replied. "But hand the I O U's over first, Ringwood."

"Double or quits again?" asked the young man, as he took the roll of papers from his purse and passed them across the table.

Hatherley silently bowed his head, but, however carefully counting up the amount of the I O U's, and putting them into his pocket when he had satisfied himself that the sum (three hundred pounds) was correct.

This time the luck was on Ringwood's side, and Hatherley found himself the loser by four hundred pounds. But the fact served in no wise to afflict him, and he turned blandly away from the half-sarcastic suggestion of the burly major that he should be allowed yet one more chance to retrieve his luck.

"You seem very keen on collecting bad debts," remarked one of the company; "would you like to buy up any of mine?" For one of them he let you out, I sold a mare to a first-rate hunter, sound all over. But he put her into a damp stable, or she caught cold upon the journey, and picked up a cough somehow; and now he swears she isn't sound, and kindly offers to return her or pay half the sum agreed upon. I've declined the offer—and there we are at present."

"Hatherley is like Aladdin's magician," remarked another, "he wants to exchange new lamps for old ones."

To all of which the object of their chat remained utterly unmoved, lighting a fresh cigar with the unaffected sang-froid. He was a rich man as well as a lavish one, and the loss of a few hundred pounds was nothing to him compared to the satisfaction of possessing those I O U's, and the consciousness that he had stopped the tongue of Keith's latest creditor in the Rory O'More. He was presently he was putting the whole party into rars of laughter with one of his racy stories, told with the caustic humor of which he was so consummate a master. He remained in the club till late that night, or, rather, early the next morning; but he ob-

served that Colonel Stockton did not put his appearance—a fact he thought somewhat unusual, at any rate at this time of the year, when the season was beginning to wane and social requirements to relax their claim upon the fashionable world.

The next morning, however, he was sitting at a comparatively early hour in Lady Teasdale's breakfast-room. She was in fact just finishing a late meal, the result of a fatiguing ball the night before, when his name was brought in, and at once she told the servant to admit him. She knew he must have a purpose in coming so early; and she was a woman who never gave herself airs about receiving her friends at any hour, if disengaged. So he was shown into the morning-room, where Lord Teasdale, who had a kindly regard for the young man, shook hands with him cordially.

"You had better depart, James," said Lady Teasdale. "Gordon has something particular to say to me; I can see it in his face."

"And you want to keep your secret to yourself? All right," replied her husband, good-humoredly, rising. "Then I'll make myself scarce. But I hope you'll stop to lunch, Hatherley?"

"No, thanks—thanks very much; I can't do that today."

"Well, tomorrow, then? You may have something more to say about the secret, you know?"

And, with a pleasant smile, Lord Teasdale took himself out of the room.

"Well," said Lady Teasdale, "what is it?"

For answer, Hatherley pulled the packet of I O U's out of his pocket and put it into her hands.

"Look here, Lady Teasdale, I want you to manage this for me. A woman can always do things of this kind gracefully, when a man would make the deuce of a muddle over it."

"Don't swear, but go on and explain."

"Well, you see, I got hold of these papers last night—three hundred pounds it is—and I want them returned to Ronaldson—anonymous."

"How did you get hold of them? You didn't offer to pay his debts, did you, you foolish Don Quixote?"

"Oh, dear, no—I amused myself with a little gambling, that's all. I tossed the fellow who had them, for their possession, and won. It wasn't at all a bad joke. Of course, I'm glad Ronaldson should have them back. He's too tidy a fellow to have those sort of things floating about unredemmed."

"And his wife's a still tidier kind of fellow."

Hatherley's face flushed, but he went on calmly:

"I don't like to hear a good sort of chap like that spoken of as a swindler. But you mustn't let out they come from me."

"Good gracious! Then they will put it all down to me or Teasdale?"

"Why not? What's the odds if they do?"

"Why? Because James and I prefer to father our own good deeds, not other people's."

"It's not a good deed. For heaven's sake don't make a fuss over it, Lady Teasdale. All you've got to do is to give the roll to Mrs. Keith for her husband, and decline to answer questions."

"Then from this, Gordon, I imagine you think things are going bad with the Ronaldsons?"

"You ought to know that better than I, Lady Teasdale. But they speak of him at the club as being quite cleaned out. I guess he's been pretty reckless."

"Oh, poor Margherita—poor child! I feared it was so. I went there two days ago, but she was out. I will go again this evening. I'm dreadfully afraid, Gordon, that these debts of honor are not their only liabilities."

"Of course, not," he replied. "A man of Keith Ronaldson's constitution would much rather leave his butcher and baker unpaid than get a bad name at his club."

"I heard a report that they were going abroad; I must ask Margherita if it be true."

"No?" commented Hatherley, becoming suddenly very thoughtful. "I should like to know at once, if that be the case."

"And why, may I ask?"

"Well, I presume they will want to let or sell their house. Please let me know, for I think I may find a tenant for them."

"Yourself, for instance?" she asked, smiling half-disapprovingly.

"Lady Teasdale, you are disagreeable this morning. You are trying to snub me. No, not for myself. An old aunt of mine wants a house in town before next spring. I don't see why Ronaldson's shouldn't suit her."

"I don't wish to be disagreeable or to snub you, Gordon. But don't you think it may be remarked upon if you take so much trouble on their account? May not people say it is for Mrs. Keith's sake you feel so much interest in the matter?"

"Lady Teasdale, the devil, I believe, may be painted white; but there are angels in the world—few and far between—too white, I think, ever to be colored black. Mrs. Keith is one of them. You are the last person I should have expected to put the bar of vulgar comments across the path of a little friendly help."

"You are right," she said, after a moment. "and I am wrong. Forgive me, Gordon; and she held out her hand to him."

"Wait a moment," he said, "hear me out. I worship the very ground on which that noble, beautiful woman treads; I would—if by so doing I might save her pain and trouble—lay down my life for her, and think it an honor. But I am not in love with her; I would not marry her if she were free. I was; but now I feel she is too high above me. I would rather look at her on the pedestal where she stands in my mind, and reverence her there; it is quite enough if I see her at times and speak to her at times. Her husband might know all my feeling toward her, and he would be a fool if he were jealous; for I could not if I would, and I would not if I could, speak a word to her untrue to the reverence I feel. Now, Lady Teasdale, you know all. Tell me, do you blame me? Do you think my state of mind an unworthy one?"

His face was flushed and his tone eager, and she was astonished to find the tears rising to her eyes.

"Unworthy? No!" she said. "I may be wrong, but I call it ennobling. You are so romantic, so different from others. Gordon, perhaps," she added, smiling, "some people might think it a little strong to hear you were ready to lay

down your life for another man's wife. But I don't see it myself—it's so much to their gain, I should say."

"No," said Hatherley, quietly; "it's to my gain."

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To be continued.

## QUARREL OVER THEIR CASTLE

Howard Gould and His Pretty Actress Wife Said to Have Separated.

New York, Oct. 8. — Mrs. Howard Gould, who witnessed the Vanderbilt cup race from her touring car, Saturday, surrounded by a circle of friends, was as unapproachable as her husband, somewhere out in the Atlantic, on the yacht Niagara, when an effort was made to learn if there was truth in the rumor that the millionaire and his actress wife had agreed to separate.

A few close friends of the couple there are who may be in a position to know the present status of the Gould domestic affairs, but they are saying nothing. Because since their return from Europe, during the first week in September, Mr. Gould and his wife have not been living under the same roof, gossip had it that a rift had appeared between them, and that the woman, who was pretty Kitty Clemons, of San Francisco and London, had given over the dream of living in a castle as the wife of one of America's wealthiest men.

Mrs. Gould left the St. Regis, where she has been living alone for the last three weeks, on Friday, and with her trunks and dogs traveled to Castle Gould, the country home of herself and husband at Sands Point, L. I. She did not leave word at the hotel whether she would return or not.

George Gould, who has been staying at the Waldorf Astoria since he returned from his European cruise on his yacht Niagara, went out on the sound on his yacht yesterday and has not yet returned.

It has been whispered that the reason for the apparent break between Gould and his wife can be traced to the cause for last year's fruitless trouble, the projected Castle Gould, which is to be built in semblance of Kilkenny Castle on the Gould estate at Sands Point.

The superintendent of the grounds that surround the present summer home there, and the man who has in charge the laying out of the landscape features that are to give the proposed castle a fitting setting, has fallen into disfavor with Mrs. Gould, and has had his case supported by Mr. Gould so it is said.

Because her husband would not discharge the major domo of Castle Gould, report has it that the mistress of the estate has refused longer to live under the Castle Gould roof.

Whether or not the offending superintendent was on the premises when Mrs. Gould made her trip to Sands Point on Friday, could not be learned today. It is possible that the fate of the projected Castle at Sands Point hangs on the settlement of the present and past difficulties between Gould and his wife.

Montreal, Que., Oct. 8. — A titled woman of the British aristocracy shipping horses from the port of Montreal, personally superintending the work, was a sight never before witnessed at this harbor, but such was the case when the steamship Mont-Perth, of the C. P. R. line left port on her recent trip to Avonmouth.

The person in question is Ernestine Hunt, eldest daughter of the Marquis of Alibury. She was the center of attraction before the boat sailed. She has started a ranch in Calgary. Alibury, a stretch of land between 30,000 and 40,000 acres in extent, and came to Montreal dressed in real cowboy fashion. She is a dark-complexioned young woman about 28 years of age; wore a sombrero and black waist, khaki-colored skirt reaching to the knees, leather leggings and shoes. Her hair was cut short.

From Calgary, the horses, 17 in number, were conveyed by freight to Montreal, and loaded on the C. P. R. steamers. The horses were in a half-wild state, but Miss Hunt could handle them just about as she pleased, although the deckhands found it necessary to keep at a safe and respectful distance.

"Since I was 20 years old," said Miss Hunt, "I have been flung my way through the world. As long as I can remember I have had a roving disposition, and have been exceptionally fond of two things," and the young lady's face beamed, "horses and the sea. Before I was 24 years of age I had been round the Horn, and was on the night of the time of the Jameson raid. A few months after this I made the trip to Australia and return in a sailing vessel. I then went to Liverpool, where

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