

friends of his, and it may save him from letting Edmonds get his grip upon the Range" she said.

Hastings made a sign of reluctant assent. "I don't quite know how I can do it personally, in view of the figure wheat is standing at, and I don't think much of any security that Gregory could offer me. Still, there is, perhaps, a way in which it could be arranged, and it's one that, considering everything, is more or less admissible. I think I'll wait here for Agatha."

Agatha was in the waggon driven by Sproatly close behind them, and when he had handed her and Winifred down Hastings, who walked to the house with them, drew her into an unoccupied room, while Mrs. Nansen took the rest into the big general one.

"I'm afraid that Gregory's in rather serious trouble. Sally seems very anxious about him," he said. "It's rather a delicate subject, but I understand that in a general way you are on good terms with both of them?"

Agatha met his somewhat embarrassed gaze with a smile. She fancied that what he really wished to discover was whether she still felt any bitterness against Gregory and blamed him for pledging himself to Sally.

"Yes," she said, "Sally and I are good friends, and I am very sorry to hear that Gregory is in any difficulty."

Hastings still seemed embarrassed, and she was becoming puzzled by his manner.

"Once upon a time you would have done anything possible to make things easier for him," he said. "I wonder if I might ask if to some extent you have that feeling still?"

"Of course. If he is in serious trouble I should be glad to do anything within my power to help him."

"Even if it cost, we will say, about six hundred English pounds?"

Agatha gazed at him in bewildered astonishment. "There are some twenty dollars in my possession which your wife handed me not long ago."