

"I think we'll sit this waltz out, Denny," murmured Fanny as Sherrit left them. "It is so hot here. It must be cooler down stairs. Shall we try?"

Denny was only too glad, and said so. He could just walk straight and felt sleepy. Fanny took his arm and guided him gently (as you may have seen a thought-reader guide his victim to the hidden pin) through dim passages where other couples were; then through some where there was no one; up stairs and down and to and fro; so that Denny got sleepier and sleepier, losing all mark of place, all count of time. At last she took him to a little room off one of the passages; it was dimly lighted, and there were a couple of chairs.

"What a charming place to rest in!" cried Fanny, "away from all the heat and noise."

Denny agreed with her: he would have been glad to sit down even on a furze-bush.

"There is a dreadful draught though," said Fanny, shivering.

Denny pushed the door to.

"Oh, Denny, don't shut it!" she cried; but it was too late. They were in a cell, used for untried prisoners when the court was sitting, and the spring lock (carefully oiled that day) kissed the slot, noiselessly, and held fast.

Mrs. Knox-Glynn had left the court house before supper on a plea of indisposition. Before going she had deputed the chaperonage of her sister to a flighty matron, who forthwith forgot all about it. So that nobody noticed Fanny's absence; and guests and hosts went home, and tired mess-waiters locked up the court house, and no one thought of looking for the trapped doves.

At noon next day Jim Fitz-Urse raved through Cleggan hunting for his sister.

Sherrit who had carefully planned his *coup de théâtre*, came to the court house at one o'clock. His regiment had lent many of the decorations used the night before, and he brought with him all the Militia officers that could be spared from barracks to superintend the dismantling of the ball-room. These, with some civilians picked up on the way, made a noisy crowd, and it was long before any of them noticed the thumping sound that came from one of the passages. At last, no one could ever say how, the monotonous pounding caught the general attention, someone went to explore; the noise was traced; the key sent for; and they crushed in a body to the cell door.