

"Let's have a look!" He stretched out his hand for it in the same idle way. Aunt M'riar's nature might have been far less simple than it was, and yet she might have been deceived by his manner. That he was aiming at possession of the paper was the last thing it seemed to imply. But he knew his part well, and whom he had to deal with.

Absolutely unsuspecting, she let his fingers close upon it. Even then, so sure did he feel of landing his fish, that he played it on the very edge of the net. "Well," said he. "Just you look at it again," and relinquished it to her. Then, instead of putting his hand back in his pocket, he stretched it out again, saying:—"Stop a bit! Let's have another look at it."

She instantly restored it, saying:—"Only look with your eyes, and you'll see the name's all right." And then in a startled voice:—"But what?—but why?" provoked by the unaccountable decision with which he folded it, never looking at it.

He slipped it inside the breast-pocket of his coat, and buttoned it over. "That was my game, you see!" said he, equably enjoying the dumb panic of his victim.

As for her, she was literally speechless, for the moment. At last she just found voice to gasp out:—"Oh, Daverill, you can't mean it! Give it me back—oh, give it me back! Will you give it me back for money? . . . Oh, how can you have the heart? . . ."

"Let's see the money. How much have you got? Put it down on this here table." He seemed to imply that he was open to negotiation.

With a trembling hand M'riar got at her purse, and emptied it on the table. "That is every penny," she said—"every penny I have in the house. Now give it me!"

"Half a bean, six bob, and a mag." He picked up and pocketed the sixteen shillings and a halfpenny, so described.

"Now you *will* give it back to me?" cried poor Aunt M'riar, with a wail in her voice that must have reached Dolly, for a pathetic cry answered her from the room above.

"Some o' these days," was all his answer, imperturbably. "There's your kid squealing. Time I was out. . . . What's that?"

Was it a new terror, or a thing to thank God for? Uncle Mo's big voice at the end of the Court.

The convict made for the street-door—peeped out furtively. "He's turned in at young Ikey's," said he. Then to M'riar, using an epithet to her that cannot be repeated:—"Down on