

"sacred" marriage tie that obtains among women of M'riar's class and type will understand her horror and indignation. And all the more if he knows the extraordinary importance they attach to a certificate which is, after all, only a guarantee that the marriage-bond is recorded elsewhere, not the attested record itself. For a moment she was unable to speak, and when words did come, they were neither protest nor contradiction, but:—"Let me out! Let me out!"

The convict shifted his chair without rising, and held the door back for her exit. "Ah," said he, "go and have a look at it!" He had taken her measure exactly. She went straight upstairs, carrying her candle to the wardrobe by Dolly's bed, where her few private possessions were hidden away. Dolly would not wake. If she did, what did it matter? Aunt M'riar heard a small melodious dream-voice in the pillow say tenderly:—"One cup wiv soody." It was the rehearsal of that banquet that the great Censorship had disallowed.

A lock in a drawer, refractory at first, brought to terms at last. A box found far back, amenable to its key at sight. A still clean document, found and read by the light of a hurriedly snuffed candle. Then an exclamation of relief from the reader:—"There now! As if I could have been mistook!" It was such a relief that she fairly gasped to feel it.

No doubt a prudent, judicious person, all self-control and guiding maxims, would have refolded and replaced that document, locked the drawer, hidden the key, and met the cunning expectancy of the evil face that awaited her with:—"You are entirely mistaken, and I was absolutely right."

But M'riar was another sort. Only one idea was present in the whirlwind of her release from that hideous anxiety—the idea of striking home her confutation of the lie that had caused it in the face of its originator. She did the very thing his subtlety had anticipated. As he heard her returning footsteps, and the rustle of the paper in her hand, he chuckled with delight at his easy triumph, and perhaps his joy added a nail in the coffin of his soul.

The snicker had gone from his face before she returned, marriage certificate in hand, and held it before his eyes. "There now!" said she. "What did I tell you?"

He looked at it apathetically, reading it, but not offering to take it from her. "'Tain't reg'lar!" said he. "Name spelt wrong, for one thing. My name."

"Oh, Daverill, how can you say that? It's spelt right."