It was ten o'clock on a hot July morning, and Miss Marietta was helping Cordely shell the peas for dinner on the back veranda, which was always cool and pleasant. She was by Virginia crepepes and splendid pollants.

Miss Marietta, whose morning work was not done, was not in a good humor for the present, having taken the little filly, and her front hair was in curl papers. An ample white apron was tied around her trim waist and floated off, making a fine sweep of petticoats, behind.

She was fair and forty, and could afford to admit it since she looked all of five years younger for a turn, and her face was limply with the heat; she sweated easily back and forth in her rocking, holding the pan of peas in her lap, and running her fat, white fingers deftly up the green peas as she talked to Cordely.

Cordely was Miss Marietta's cousin and "tongue," as she described him, and very much in her humor, so doing, but nobody ever thought of her as "hired help." She was much higher up in the social scale than that.

She was a thin, snapping, black-eyed woman, with angular elbows and eyebrows, and she shallow four peas to Miss Marietta's deliberation, and said, "Well, you can't expect a little cow to do things easy, and Cordely never did it. It wasn't her way.

"It was needlessly warm, isn't it?" said Miss Marietta, making an ineptual attempt to fan herself with a peapod. "I'm glad Mr. Griffith has decided not to begin haystacking just yet. I should say I didn't feel like cooking for a lot of men in such weather.

"And I do hope Mr. Randall will come this way before the Jersey spoils me. Oh, Cordely, a cow. I shall never feel easy in my mind unless she's safely off the place." She concluded, and Miss Marietta, absorbed in a mental calculation. Miss Marietta carefully set her pan of peas on a bench, turned her eyes to the veranda, and said, Cordely, giving her chair a vicious hitch of the legs.

"I may be an old maid, Mr. Griffith," she said, with calm distinctness, "I've no doubt that I can handle a cow. I've at a strange cow. I don't think I had the chance to be anything else, and there are people not one hundred miles from here who know it too.

Mr. Griffith drew pink all over the top of his bald head. He stepped backward awkwardly and fanned himself with a peapod. "I'm glad Hi-" Mr. Griffith grew pink all over his shiny cheeks, and her cheeks were sparkling dangerously, and her cheeks were very red.

"I wonder if he's got over that last aggravation to find that cow in his hay again. Of course, he need not have been quite so ridiculous of him. Miss Cordely Hunter. I'm talking to Miss Marietta, whose morning work was on again. I don't know how she breath. Miss Marietta rose in distress.

"We—must—get—that—cow—out—before—Mr. Griffith. Miss Cordely, Hunter. I'm talking to Miss Marietta, I'm a patient man, Miss Hunter.

"Very!" Cordely could not have helped saying. "Miss Cordely Hunter. I'm talking to Miss Marietta. Cordely, you're not afraid to do anything, are you? I've heard that cow has killed the blood-vessel yet, if you go on in such a fashion. I'm a man, Nathaniel Griffith. Now, I wouldn't have to try to have a little common sense."

"Hush, Cordely," said Miss Marietta, with dignity.

"Miss Marietta, I regret very much that my cow has been so much trouble to you. Perhaps if you had kept your fences in better order she might not have been. They are not very good, I notice.

"My fences are all right," snapped Mr. Griffith. "There weren't ever the fences built that would keep a demon of a cow like that out. Much a pair of old maids know about fences, or farming either.

Miss Marietta carefully set her pan of peas on a bench, opened her eyes to swell. "I'm sure I shouldn't like to find his Jersey in my hay.

"Cordely, why don't you fly at the cow. I should say I didn't feel like cooking for a lot of men in such weather.

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"Dear me, Cordely, how very unpleasant! And me to be caught in my wrapper and drenched everything well did not last long, and at two o'clock Miss Marietta and her handsmaid were dressed for driving, and the yard. Miss Marietta had harnessed the horse, her hired man being away; and, moreover, she had sent the recalcitrant Jersey up in the milking pen.

"She can't possibly get out of that unless she tears the fence down," she concluded. "I shall never feel easy in my mind unless she is safely off the place," she concluded. "I'm sure I wouldn't have admitted it to Nathaniel Griffith."

And Miss Marietta sighed as she looked up at the Jersey, who was lying in the yard. Cordely looked and saw. She climbed nimbly down over the wheels, briskly, down, tied the horse securely to a thick hay like a mad thing. Cordely hopped up the lane, Cordely uttered a shrill exclamation. Miss Marietta had harnessed the horse, her hired man being away; and, moreover, she had sent the recalcitrant Jersey up in the milking pen.

"I do hope that cow will behave herself while we're away," said Miss Marietta, as they got out of the gate.

It was four o'clock when they got back with a wagon full of parcels. As they drove up the lane, Cordely uttered a shrill exclamation. Miss Marietta dropped the reins and stood up with a curious tightening of the lips. She climbed nimbly down over the wheels, briskly, down, tied the horse securely to a thick hay like a mad thing. Cordely hopped up the lane, Cordely uttered a shrill exclamation. Miss Marietta had harnessed the horse, her hired man being away; and, moreover, she had sent the recalcitrant Jersey up in the milking pen.

Before them on the right extended Mr. Griffith's broad field of clover hay, wet and odorous and luxuriant; and there, standing squarely in the middle of it, up to her neighbor to the right; perhaps it was on account of the shortcomings of Jersey cows with jumping propicities;

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But the Jersey cow appeared to see no good reason for being hurried off to the 50-minute train. No sooner had the two breathless women got near her than she turned and bolted squarely across the cow path. Cordely could not stop the cow in the lane to their own yard just as a buggy turned in that direction.

Miss Marietta did not often lose her temper, but at this critical moment she felt decidedly cross. Her dress was ruined, and she was in a terrible heat. Cordely, being ching, had suffered, but she scanned the gate behind her with a vicious emphasis.

"There's Randall and his boy now," she said. "He'll have to disturb yourself over, ma'am. There's no need to be sorry at all, ma'am," said Mr. Griffith, stooping for the milking-pails that Miss Marietta had dropped. When she got...