

*(Murmur ...)*

Austin Er...she's here. *(He steps aside)*

*A woman, the Warden, enters leading Mavis 2 (the real Mavis) with one hand and carrying her suitcase in the other*

Warden *(to Margaret)* Mrs Miriam Oliver?

Miriam Yes.

Warden *(turning to Miriam)* Sybil Braithwaite. Administrator. Fair Laws.

Miriam How do you do.

*They shake hands*

Warden I'll be brief. I imagine you are upset with the recent bereavement. Obviously an explanation is required. May I speak freely?

Margaret Yes, we're all family. Unfortunately.

Warden Apparently an error in our administration department, which was made some time ago when Mavis was first admitted, has caused this unfortunate situation. On the day that Mavis arrived at Fair Laws, another Mavis was also admitted the same morning. *(Gesturing to Mavis 1)* Mavis Brindley. *(Gesturing to Mavis 2)* Mavis Bradley. So you see, I'm afraid this whole business is the result of an inexperienced clerk and a rather antiquated Underwood typewriter.

*Pause. The Warden gives an embarrassed laugh*

If it's any consolation, a similar situation occurred some years ago with a Ron Merry and a Don Berry.

*Pause. Another embarrassed laugh*

Well, as I say, I am most dreadfully sorry for any inconvenience caused.

This is your correct sister.

Miriam *(to Mavis 2)* Hello, Mavis.

*There is no reaction*

Warden I hope our other friend hasn't been too much of a problem.

Mavis 1 I'm no problem.

Warden I see she's all packed and ready, so I won't keep you. Come along, Mavis.

*Mavis 1 stands*

When can we expect your sister to be returned?

Margaret We've decided to keep her here.

Warden She's going to live with you?

Miriam With all of us.

Margaret She's going to be shared out.

Warden Well, I am pleased. Did you hear that, Mavis? You're going to have a new home.

*Mavis 2 looks vacant*

Live with all your sisters.

Mavis I Hey, Mave, I wouldn't live with them. They all seem a bit funny to me. Keep an eye on your handbag and don't let her (*she indicates Miriam*) take your tablets off you.

Miriam Tablets?

Warden They're in her suitcase.

Miriam She's not on the pill as well, is she?

Warden No, they're anti-depressants. Give as directed on the bottle. (*After a slight pause*) I had no idea you had decided to take Mavis on. There are release papers to be signed and so on, but I won't trouble you with all that now. I'll come and see you in a few days and bring them with me.

Mavis I (*to the Warden*) I haven't got to come back here, have I?

Warden No.

Mavis I That's all right then.

Warden Haven't you enjoyed your stay?

Mavis I No, I haven't. They're all bloody cuckoo here.

Warden Now Mavis, you know you're not allowed to say words like that.

Mavis I All right. Bloody crazy then.

Warden Bring your case.

Mavis I fetches it

I'll ring you to arrange a visit one day next week.

Mavis I Ta-ra then.

No-one answers