

## THE EVENING NEWS.

Monday, March 20, 1871.

### UNDER SUSPICION.

"Then go darling," I said, "and may the Lord in his mercy watch over you, and bring you forth from this tribulation."

So Jamie went away with the constable, and I sat all night by the fire-place, weeping and crying.

When morning dawned, I tried to rouse myself for the duties of the day, but when I laid the table and put Jamie's plate in the accustomed place, and thought how, perhaps, for long days he would not be there any more, my heart filled with tears and I could eat nothing.

The news of Jamie's arrest spread quickly through the village. When they told it to Maggie Hayes, the brave girl tied on her hood, and going straight to the jail demanded an interview with her lover.

She never doubted his innocence for a moment, and there, with the bleak, dreary walls surrounding her, she vowed to remain at home and let him always and devote every energy to secure his vindication and release.

Her presence cheered Jamie, and she came from the jail to my cottage, bringing many hopeful messages from the dear boy. From her I first learned why he had been arrested.

It seemed that on Sunday night Jamie had been seen near the Presbyterian Church shortly before fire was discovered there. Nor was that the worst. Joseph Millward, whose father owned the factory where my son worked, was ready to swear that he saw Jamie rush from the vicinity of the vestry, where the fire broke out, and that he spoke to him as he passed.

David Butler, a wealthy young man, a friend of Millward's companion, and his statement was the same.

Jamie's examination—the preliminary examination they call it—took place on Tuesday. The magistrate heard the evidence, and said he must commit the prisoner to await the action of the Grand Jury.

We might have got him out on bail, but there was no one to become his bondsmen, though Jamie had plenty of friends that were all poor.

"Twill make no difference to mother," he said when I visited him in his cell, for the jury is in session, and if they find an indictment against me I shall be tried in a few days. You have money enough saved up to live on these many weeks, and they may acquit me in the end."

"But Jamie!" I asked, "what does young Millward mean by his evidence? Has he perjured himself, has he not?"

Jamie hid his face in his hands for a moment, then looking up he said resolutely:

"I can answer your question, mother. God must judge between him and me. There changing the subject—'Can you get a lawyer, mother?'

"Of course I can, and I will."

So after a little more talk I left Jamie, and sought the office of Squire Carnan. A good man the Squire was, and an honest lawyer. When he discovered who I was, and my business, he told me bluntly that he did not wish to undertake the case.

"And are you afraid that I'll not pay you?" I asked. "Indeed, sir, if it costs you a dollar you shall receive every cent that you charge."

He smiled easily.

"No, madam, 'tis not the money," he said; "but I do not like to feel that the saving of anybody's life depends on my efforts."

"Life?" I replied. "Would they hang Jamie?"

"Hang Jamie?" he replied. "In all probability they will."

I scarcely knew what I said, but begged and implored Mr. Carnan to save the poor boy. At last he consented to visit him.

"And if I am convinced of his innocence," he added, "I will endeavor to obtain his acquittal."

So the Squire went to the jail—as I went to see him—and saw my son alone in his cell.

"James," said he kindly, "I want to know the truth in this case. My position as a lawyer, and the rules of the court render whatever you may tell me now a sacred secret. By acknowledging your guilt—if you are guilty—I shall be able to shape my defense so as to obtain the lightest possible punishment."

Then Jamie stood up boldly in his cell and raising his right hand toward heaven said:

"Mr. Carnan, they may hang me, if they want to; but I am entirely innocent of this charge, and I am willing to die with these words on my lips."

The lawyer looked steadily in Jamie's eyes for a moment, and he must have seen truth written there, for he took his hand and said:

"I believe you, Riley, and I will defend you. Now tell me where you were last Sunday night."

"Well," answered Jamie, "I spent the evening at a friend's home in the northern part of the village. I returned home between eleven and twelve o'clock."

"And you passed the Presbyterian Church on your way?"

"I did," replied Jamie.

"Did you see any one in that vicinity?"

"Yes, sir."

"Who?"

"I cannot answer that question, Mr. Carnan."

Then the lawyer said and thought for a little while, and without another word he left the room, and went straight to his office, nor did he ever see him again until the day of the trial.

But he was not idle in the meantime, and when I called on him once he told me to be of good cheer; that he believed my son to be innocent, and hoped to clear him.

Maggie Bryan grew sadder and sadder day by day, and it was little sleep she got at night. While the thoughts of Williams talked of Jamie's guilt her cheeks turned red and her eyes flashed bright as the stars in heaven.

The trial came off in two weeks—sad, long weeks they were to me—but I prayed for strength, and I think the good Lord heard my prayers, and he gave me the power to bear my cross.

To be continued.

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