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Murder Could Not Kill

By Gregory Barter

"Yes, Robin, I know—I know you want to help me. You have been so very kind to me. I am most grateful. Bless you for it. But I can't tell you everything. Not yet. I know I'm asking a great deal. I don't know exactly what you intend to do, but—"

"What do you think I intend to do?" "Well, as a law-abiding citizen I suppose you've no alternative but to tell the police. Don't think I can't appreciate your position. I do. I won't blame you."

"I'm afraid my not telling—I never had any intention of telling—won't keep the police from learning you visited Brett at the 'The Man With a Scythe.'"

"Yes, it will." Her voice was assured. "I know it will. You see," she explained hurriedly, "your police were told he was there by the proprietor, the man who sheltered him in the first place—they were old friends. We arranged that before he came away. We saw no other means of keeping Mr. Marks—the proprietor—out of trouble. He explained to the police by telephone that he had become suspicious of a man who had taken up lodgings at his tavern two days ago—that he thought he might be Rufus Brett. Of course, before he telephoned we arranged for Brett to leave."

The audacity of this statement staggered Robin.

"You know where he is now, then?" "Why—why, of course! You know, too, don't you?—that's what we've been talking about."

"Is it? Well, I don't know. Where is he?" "In this house."

INSTALMENT 6.

Robin was rapidly becoming cheerfully seasoned to surprises. Nevertheless, this last revelation was more than he had bargained for. Abruptly he turned away and simply subsided limply into a chair.

"This is the very devil, I almost wish you hadn't told me," he muttered at last. "I know I asked, but—"

"He paused. "Don't worry," she said quietly. "He intends to give himself up today."

"I'm relieved to think the fellow has so much sense left," Robin remarked emphatically. "All we have to consider now is how best he can hand himself over without implicating you."

"You'll come in with me to that extent?" she asked, joy showing in her face for the first time in their discussion.

"My dear Laurette! Of course I will." Robin was exuberant now that he realised matters were to proceed more according to the dictates of law and order. "Is there any danger that Brett may reveal that you've been helping him?"

"No," Brett won't tell." Her tone was decisive. "Good. Now next we take his pal at the pub. What about the people at 'The Man With a Scythe'?"

"Only two were in the know—the proprietor, Joe Marks, and one other. That has been arranged."

"The servants here?" "None of them know anything about him. I opened the door myself for him late last night, but him in a box-room at the top of the house, and locked the door. I keep the house keys myself, and that room has never once been used since we took over the place. Indeed, no one ever goes near the whole top floor at any time."

"What about Mr. Lessing? Why, he lent himself to this—"

"But he didn't!" she interrupted. "Of course he knows nothing about it."

"Laurette! You don't mean to say you did not speak to your fiance about Brett as you have to me? Do you actually tell me that he doesn't know you have been helping him?" She shook her head.

"He doesn't. It may sound strange, I know; and perhaps it might not strike you, yet it isn't at all strange. You see my relationship is different. I could not ask my fiance to take me on trust in this affair as I have asked you. He would have been perfectly entitled to demand why I wanted to help Rufus Brett. I can't tell you—but still less can I tell him. And Peter is not the man—oh, do try to understand!"

"Yes, I'm afraid that's beyond me," Robin remarked, yet he smiled pleasantly as he spoke. "But it really doesn't matter. You must see, however, that Mr. Lessing is bound to put two and two together, and—"

"What do you mean?" she interrupted again in an anxious voice. "Well," he explained carefully, "if he somehow got to know that I followed you last night, he must have learned where I followed you to. He must wonder what you were doing there. Like myself, he is bound to have seen the newspapers this morning that it was at 'The Man With a Scythe' that Brett had been in hiding. Did he not say anything at all about that when he telephoned you this morning?"

"No. No. I suppose I deliberately side-traced him."

"She uttered a sound of desperation and made no effort to conceal her unease.

"Oh, you must be wrong," she went on earnestly. "He can't know anything about 'The Man With a Scythe.' He'd have told me. He wouldn't have allowed himself to be side-traced. Whoever saw you last night may not have followed you all that way."

"That's quite possible," Robin admitted. "I certainly didn't see anyone watching me, and I had my eyes fairly well skinned."

"You see"—there was appeal in her voice—"I don't mean to be deceitful. But I can't tell you everything—yet. I must keep my secret until I can prove that Rufus Brett is innocent."

"Prove! I'm afraid that will be a difficult job," Robin observed bluntly.

"It will; but not an impossible one."

In an instant her mood had

Pioneer Days In P. E. I.

By F. H. MacArthur

It was one of those bleak, gloomy mornings in November. The denuded trees that surrounded the Stewart home at Belfast, shivered and nodded their aged heads.

Dannie Stewart shivered too as he stood in night clothes beside the old-fashioned iron box-stove. The boy was only eleven, and this morning he had arisen early because his father had gone to spend the night with a sick relative, and they could not expect him home until late in the evening.

Dannie was not accustomed to keeping the home fires burning. Either his Dad or Mother attended to this duty, but now that his father was away and his mother none too well, it was up to him to take over. Before going off his father had warned him about letting the fire out, and eleven-year-old Dannie did his best to be careful.

The previous night he had chosen a knotty stick and, raking the fire to one side, had covered the burning ember with a generous sprinkling of ashes. "Everything will be all right," he muttered to himself, "that's the way Dad does it. Guess it will hold till morning."

At the first peep of dawn Dannie sprang out of bed and hurried to the kitchen. Carefully he raked the ashes from the firebrand; but horror of horrors! it had gone out. The boy was utterly dismayed. His mother called to him from her bedroom, where three younger children were with her in bed.

"How's the fire coming, Dannie?" "I'm afraid it's gone out, mother," said the boy. "If only I had Aunt Jane's burning glass..."

"How could you start a fire with the glass on a sunless morning like this?" questioned his mother. "It's getting late, and I must get up at once."

At that moment the youth's eyes rested on his father's flint-lock musket hanging above the door. He had seen the man folk get a spark by striking the flint from a knife. A spark and a bit of dried bark would do the trick. He was taking the gun from its rack when his mother came into the kitchen.

"Put it back in its place, Dannie," she warned. "You know your father doesn't want you meddling with his gun. It might be loaded and go off."

Dannie now recalled that the firebrand he'd picked the night before was not a hemlock knot. That's why it had gone out.

"You've been downright careless, son," scolded Mrs. Stewart after she'd heard her boy's confession. Then noting the look of disappointment on the child's face she added—in a more kindly voice—"Well, you couldn't help it, I suppose. If it's out, it's out. I ought to have attended to it myself. Put

changed. She stood and faced him with something of a challenge in her attitude.

"Come: say you will help me do it?" To be continued

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on your clothes and run over to Mrs. MacDonald's place and borrow some fire. Do hurry child; it's getting late and the children will be up and waiting for their breakfast."

Dannie slipped into his homespun trousers, pulled on his heavy cow-hide shoes, and with cap in hand rushed out into the cold morning air. His feet took wings down the narrow clearing that led from the house to a little winding cow-patch among the forest trees. It had been there vegetable garden the year before and a potato field the year before that. It was still rocky, with a few giant stumps lifting their heads three feet above the soil.

Dannie casually observed the rocks and stumps as he sped along, his mittenless hands blue with cold. On and on he ran, and then entered a second clearing. It looked much like their own except that it was much larger but more even under his feet. Dannie knew this was part of the MacDonald homestead hacked out of the forest four years after he was born. The door of the log house was swung wide and a thin column of smoke struggled from the chimney and ascended towards the clouds. The odor of pancakes filled the morning air. Oh, how good they smelt! Pancakes were Dannie's favorite morning meal—pancakes and mush and milk. Before he'd reached the house Mrs. MacDonald framed herself in the doorway. She was a kindly soul and her presence radiated sunshine.

"How is your mother this morning, Dannie?" she called out in a voice that was tender and full of genuine affection.

"Mother's better, thank you, Mrs. MacDonald, but our fire went out last night; it was my fault."

"Well, well! It might be a lot worse, Dannie. Now suppose your mother was real sick, that would be bad news indeed. Very bad news. But come in child, we've

plenty of fire to lend. Besides here's a warm pancake to eat while you're waiting." Having delivered this pleasant little speech Mrs. Mac got the tongs and drew from the fire-place a great glowing coal. Dannie held it between a couple of stout chips which he had picked up on his journey. Then, thanking his good-natured neighbor, he set for home, feeling much happier. Several times the boy was obliged to stop long enough to exchange fresh chips for the burned out ones. Once while doing this the live coal rolled perilously near a patch of ice which might easily have extinguished it, unless one was quick-acting. Soon he was speeding along the narrow forest path, the breeze causing his precious coal to shine like the evening star.

With a contented sigh Dannie placed the coal on the dried fuel, and in no time at all the Stewart's were eating their porridge as though nothing out of the ordinary had taken place.

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CANOE COVE Y. P. S.

The regular meeting of Canoe Cove Y. P. S. was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Colin MacFadyen on March 7.

Meeting opened by singing the Doxology followed by repeating the Lord's Prayer. The Scripture which was read in unison was taken from Luke 7:11-17.

The lesson "Several Miracles" was read by Joe MacKenzie.

The devotional period was brought to a close by singing "Faith of Our Fathers."

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and adopted followed by roll call answered by sixteen members.

Reports of committees were then given. Collection for the evening amounted to \$1.22.

The meeting was brought to a close by repeating the Benediction.

A delicious lunch was served by the committee in charge, assisted by the hostess.

IRISHTOWN SCHOOL

Report for March. Grade VII.—1. Theresa Brown; 2. Rona Paynter; 3. Eleanor Mann; Grade V.—1. Lois Stavert; 2. Irene Proffit.

Grade IV.—1. Charles Brown; 2. Clifford MacLeod; 3. Lorne Adams; Grade III.—1. Beryl MacLeod; 2. Boyce Stavert; 3. Willie Paynter.

Grade II. Sr.—1. Lewis Simmons; 2. Thelma MacLeod; 3. Gerald Brown.

Grade II. Jr.—1. Mildred Reeves; Grade I. Sr.—1. Eric Campbell; Grade I. Jr.—1. Grant Mann; 2. Joyce Stavert.

Teacher—A. M. Crozier.

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