

Mary Marley

It became absolutely necessary for the defense to find Mary Marley. She seemed to be the one important witness. Her name came up in the story told by every witness. She had worked in the factory at the same time the other girls were employed there; she had witnessed all that the other girls had, and evidently a great deal more. When little Tillie Brown told her story to Mr. Bocker, the counsel for the defense, Mr. Bocker inquired: "Now, how do you know this to be a fact? Did you see it?"

"Oh, no," said Tillie, "I didn't see it, but I know it's true, for Mary Marley saw it, and she told me."

In Josie Johnson's story was the very proof the defense wanted, but when closely pressed Josie said: "I didn't hear him say so, myself. I wasn't in the room at the time. But Mary Marley was, for she told me all about it."

It was clear that Mary Marley must be found, but nobody knew what had become of her. All of the other girls who had worked in the factory with Mary, four years before, had been found, after a long search. They were scattered all over the city, and one had married and gone to Michigan, and another had married and gone to Nebraska. But nobody knew where Mary was. Frank Morgan, Lawyer Bocker's clerk and general helper, had been looking up the witnesses and working up the testimony in this case for more than a year. Incidentally, he had all this time been looking for Mary Marley. All he could learn of her was, that she had a half brother who was a carpenter, and who had at one time worked in Euglewood.

Two weeks before the time set for the trial Mary Marley's case was turned over to a detective agency. Three men were set to work to find her, with instructions to spare no expense and to locate her within a week.

Four days passed and the detectives reported no progress. On the Fifth day Frank Morgan went to Englewood to hunt for the half brother, the carpenter. He wandered around the village, looking for houses in course of construction. He interviewed every boss carpenter and contractor, but none knew a carpenter named Marley. Frank was growing very weary of this apparently hopeless hunt, when he encountered a contractor named Morgan. Mr. Morgan had never heard of a carpenter named Marley. Then he and Frank fell to discussing the antecedents of their families, to see if they could discover any relationship to each other. As is usual in such cases, they discovered none, but the chat made them friends, and perhaps interested the contractor the more in Frank's business.

As he was about to leave, Frank said: "Now, you're sure you never heard of Marley?"

"Let me think," said the contractor. "Seems to me—yes—oh! he's the fellow, I remember him now; got into some trouble here three or four years ago with his wife. She was divorced from him, and he kidnaped their child here one day. I remember him now—there was a good deal of talk about it."

“What’s become of him?”

“Oh! bless you, I haven’t the least idea. Never thought of him from that day to this.”

“You say it created a good deal of talk?”

“Lord! yes; everybody in the neighborhood knew of it.”

“Well, now, who’s the gossip in this community? Isn’t there some old woman ‘round here who knows everybody’s business? There generally is in every neighborhood.”

“The contractor smiled. “Now, I can tell you of an old woman whose tongue is loose at both ends; but of course, I wouldn’t want you to give me away. But if there’s anything she don’t know about what’s happened around here for the last twenty years it isn’t worth nothing.”

Frank promised he would never tell.

“Well, her name is old Mrs. Fuller, and she lives over here on —street some where. You find her, and you can bet she’ll tell you more than you want to know.”

Frank hurried to —street to find the gossip. After inquiring at several houses for the old lady’s residence, a fat, gawky boy answered his ring.

“Do you know an old lady named Fuller, who lives on this street, young man?” asked Frank.

The boy looked at him with open mouth for a moment and then said: “Does she make wagons or sell milk?” “I give it up,” said Frank. “Well, the Mrs. Fuller that sells milk lives right over there in that little wooden house,” said the boy.

“I guess that’s the woman I want,” said Frank.

He knocked at the door of the cottage, and an old lady appeared. She wore a lace cap and a long alpaca apron. “How de do! How de do?” she said, “Come in, I’ve been out all the afternoon, and the fire is nearly out. Come, Nellie, git down”—tipping up a high backed rocking chair and sprung out of it a large white cat. Then she turned the cushions over. “Sit down—who are ye, anyway,”—peering into his face.

“My name is Morgan. I am trying to find a man named Marley—a carpenter. He got into some trouble three or four years ago. Kidnaping a child, or something. Do you know where he is now?”

“That was the queerest thing,” said the old lady. “My! Oh! that was four years ago last summer. Yes, it was in the summer, for the child was playin’ out in the front yard. I didn’t see it myself, an’ I don’t know anything about it, but I heard he went right into the yard and picked the child up an’ ran down the street, the woman after him, screamin’, an’ every body comin’ out to their

doors. That was after they was divorced, you know. I don't know what the trouble was between them; but they say she was just as bad as he was, and the Lord knows that was bad enough. I saw her once, an' I declare to goodness"—

"Yes, that's all right," broke in Frank; "but I don't care anything about that. Where is he now?"

"Bless you! I don't know. I heard it said he married agin—married some woman from Blue Island—a widder, I b'lieve. An' she's a vixen, they tell me. If he couldn't git along with his first woman, I don't know what he'll do with this one, if all reports are true about her."

"Do you know where she lives?"

"Oh, I tell you I don't know the first thing in the world about either of 'em. She's a midwife I hear, an' come to think about it she 'tended a woman that had a baby over here on S— street somewhere, a couple of weeks ago."

"Where does the woman live who had the baby?"

"I don't know. I didn't care enough about it to ask. A little bit of a child it was, they tell me, an' ain't expected to live."

"Well, who told you the woman had a baby?"

"Sure enough. That's so. It was the Turner girls told me. I don't know how they know. Mebbe they're some relation to her or something. They don't live here, you know. They're just here going to school. They live over here on N— street with Mrs. Gage, I know where the house is, but I don't know the number. They're real nice girls and"—

"Yes, yes; I know," said Frank. "I'm ever so much obliged to you. I'll go see if I can find the young ladies."

He started for N— street. Here was a hot trail. If he could find the Turner girls and then the woman who had been attended by the midwife, then the midwife herself, the wife of the carpenter, he was in a fair way to learn something of Mary Marley.

He found Mrs. Gage's house without trouble, and inquired at the door: "Do the Misses Turner live here?"

"Yes, sir; they are just sitting down to dinner."

Through an open door Frank saw two young ladies at the dinner table. He was so full of his business that he forgot the small formalities of the occasion, and walking into the dining room he said: "Good evening, ladies. Do either of you know a lady who had a baby a few days ago?"

The young ladies blushed, looked very much astonished and half rose from their seats.

Frank hastened to apologize. And by a rather lengthy explanation he caused the young ladies to grant him pardon for his brusqueness, and to fully appreciate the importance of the business at hand. But the young ladies did not know where the sick lady lived. It was over on B— street somewhere, but just where they did not know. They had never been in the house. Nor did they know the lady's name. It was a queer name—began with an I—Illington, or Illingsworth, or something like that. They had learned by chance of the birth of the baby, and really didn't know anything about the matter at all.

Frank's hopes sunk, but with this thread of a clew he went over to B— street and began to ring door bells and inquire: "Do you know a man who lives on this street by the name of Illington, or Illingsworth, or some such name?"

And the answer would come: "No, there's no such man lives around here," and the door would close.

Frank was about to give it up. He was cold and hungry, and the hour was getting late.

"Yes, Julia; the man who lives in the cottage just beyond the big brick has a name like that. It begins with I, anyway," said a female voice within the house.

Frank's hopes went up, and he hurried to the cottage. His knock brought to the door a big, broad shouldered man, in his shirt sleeves.

"Good evening," said Frank. Does your name begin with I?"

"Well, you bet it does. My name is Ingelfritz. Come in."

Frank seized the broad shouldered man by the arm and in melodramatic tones inquired: "Did your wife have a baby lately?"

"Well—yes—she did," said Mr. Ingelfritz, scratching his head in perplexity and astonishment, "but I swear I don't know what business that is of yours."

Frank hurried to explain that he was looking for the midwife, and asked: "Do you know where she lives?"

"Yes, I know where she lives. But she hadn't better come to my house again. If I had her here now I think I would throw her clear across the street. She abused my wife and nearly killed my baby, and charged me twice as much as she ought to. She's a terror, I tell you!"

By this time he had found the card for which he had been hunting through his pockets. He handed it to Frank. The carpenter's wife lived at No.— Thirteenth street, Chicago.

Frank's feelings were away up in G again. He gave the new baby a half dollar to cut its teeth on, shook Mr. Ingelfritz warmly by the hand and hurried to the station to catch a train.

At the house on Thirteenth street a woman, answering the door bell, said: “Yes, Mr. Marley lives in the second flat. There he is now, coming down stairs.”

A keen eyed, long whiskered man shook hands with Frank and invited him up stairs.

“Mr. Marley, you have a half sister by your name.”

“Yes.”

“Where is she?”

“I don’t know. I haven’t heard of her for three years.”

Frank was struck dumb for a moment. Was this the result of his “fine work”—to run up against a stone wall just as he hoped for success?

“You don’t mean that?” he said, pleadingly. “You know where she is. Come, man, think again. You certainly know here your sister is.”

“No, I don’t; and I don’t want to know where she is, d— her! I have no use for her. She and I got through with each other a long time ago.”

“But can’t you suggest some way for me to find her?”

“No, I don’t know anything about her. But, say, I’ll tell you what I’ll do, if you want to find her right bad, if you’ll give me \$5 I’ll go into a trance and tell you where she is.

Here was a now ray of hope. “I’ll go you,” said Frank. “Get into your trance right quick, and here’s your money as soon as you come out of it with Mary’s address.”

“Oh, but I can’t get into a trance any time I want to,” replied Marley, evasively. “I must have two or three days, may be a week, before one of them catches me.”

“I can’t wait so long,” said Frank. “I must know within an hour. Here, I’ll give you \$5 to tell me where she is, and you needn’t go into the trance. What do you say?”

The carpenter insisted that he didn’t know his sister’s whereabouts. Frank finally drew out of him that she had an old aunt named Murphy, who lived at Humboldt Park. He seemed to regret having given up this information, for later he declared that the old lady had moved to Milwaukee. Frank bade him good night, believing that the old aunt was in Humboldt Park, and depending on this last clew for the finding of Mary Marley.

Early next morning he took a cab and drove to Humboldt Park. After much inquiry at the drug stores and groceries he located Mrs. Murphy, and against hope found the old lady in her cottage. “Mrs. Murphy, you have a niece named Mary Marley. Do you know where she is?” he inquired.

“Oh, yes; I see her every once in awhile. She’s working for Lawyer K—, at No.— Calumet avenue,” she replied.

Frank did not throw his arms about the old lady’s neck and kiss her, although he felt like doing so. He dived down into his pocket, brought up two silver dollars, and taking the chances of insulting the old aunt put them in her hand, thanked her and jumped into his cab.

He drove at once to the lawyer’s residence on Calumet avenue and rang the door bell. A sturdy, fair haired servant girl appeared at the door. He seized her by the wrist and said: “Your name is Mary Marley?” “Yes, sir,” said she, a little frightened, “I know it is.”

“I’d rather see you than any woman on earth,” he exclaimed. “I want you. Put on your bonnet and come with me.”

“But I haven’t done nothing,” she cried, wrenching her wrist from his hand, “and won’t go with you.”

“I know you haven’t. Of course you haven’t. Where’s your mistress?”

Mrs. K— appeared, and after long explanation Frank convinced her that he was all right, and that no harm would come to Mary. Mrs. K— gave her consent, and told Mary she could go if she wished. Then followed another long explanation and much argument and persuasion on Frank’s part to induce Mary to go to the lawyer’s office with him. Finally she consented, put on her best gown and bonnet, and together they drove to Lawyer Bocker’s office.

Frank ushered her into the lawyer’s reception room. The door of the private office was closed. He entered, and found Mr. Bocker and Mr. Wall, the defendant in the coming trial, in consultation with the three detectives who had for a week been looking for Mary Marley.

“Well, Morgan,” said Lawyer Bocker, “we’ll have to give up the Marley girl. We haven’t time to reach her. She’s married and gone to Florida.”

“That’s too bad,” said Frank. “How did you learn this?”

“These gentlemen have just turned in their report,” said the lawyer, waving his hand toward the detectives.

“So you couldn’t find her?” said Frank, addressing the detectives.

“No,” said one. “We run down her half brother, and found from him that the girl was married about a year ago and went to Florida. Just where she is nobody knows.”

“Well, now, gentleman,” said Frank, “if you would really like to meet the young lady I’ll introduce you to her.”

He received no answer but a stare from them.

He stepped into the reception room, seized Mary by the hand, led her into the private office, and, bowing with mock dignity to the three detectives, said: “Gentlemen, I have the pleasure of presenting Miss Mary Marley, who recently married and went to Florida.”—*Paul Hull in Chicago News*

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