WIEN MELINDY TOL' ME YES.

first sweetheart, Lucindy,
Did Melindy, my Melindy, tell me "Yes;"
An' the atmosphere wur windy, 'way from
Pokunville to Indy,
Windy with the breezy music of eternal
blessedness.

An' she said it fair an' squarely, an' not "Call again" or "May be,"
An'a New Jerusalem glory lit the fiel an

wilderness.

An' the sun burst out like laughter on the round face of a baby.

Wen Melindy, my Melindy, tol' me "Yes!"

Like a twenty million orchestra away beyond

all countin',
The bob'links bubbled over in a music water An' I felt jest like a-mountin' on the meetin

house an' shoutin' That Paradise was open, with admission free Each grass blade in the medder wax a string to Natur's fiddle, That was played on by the zephyrs with a vel-

vety caress;
An' ol' Natur's jints were limbered, an' she sashayed down the middle,
W'en Melindy, my Melindy, tol' me "Yes!"

An' the angels played so bully that the music

An' the angels played so bully thet the music reached the gateway
An' came spillin' through the op'nin, and a-singin' down to earth—
Came a-singin' such a great way thet the universe wuz straightway
Shoutin' in the glad redem'tion of a holy secon' birth;
An' I—I set a-straddle on the ridge pole of creation.

An'only fit to holler in my hootin' happi-

ness,
W'en Melindy, my Melindy, filled my heart
'ith jubilation,
W'en Melindy, my Melindy, tol' me Yes!"
—Yankee Blade.

UNDER A CLOUD.

I am Agnes Grey; or at least that was my name when one bright summer day, the sky as blue as though there never could be another cloud in it, I came home across the fields from Nellie Hobart's wedding. Very sweet she looked in her bridal dress, and very fond the gentleman to whom she had given her hand seemed to be of her. The church was decked with flowers, and not one of those whosat there but wished the pretty young creature well; and as she stepped out from the shadow of the painted windows into the clear, golden, out of door light I thought of the old rhyme-Happy is the bride Whom the sun shines on

And thought that she looked like one of those fair saints the old masters were so fond of painting, blue eyed and blond, and with mouths like those of smiling

I thought of something else, also, as suppose every girl who had been to that wedding did, could one but know the truth. I wondered whether it would ever be my turn to stand where Nellie stood that day, and what manner of man my bridegroom would be; for I had never yet seen any one I could fancy giving myself to, almost body and soul, as a wife must. I was making a picture of him for myself, like a goose, when my foot caught in the grass, where some boys had tied it, and down I fell, twisting my ankle and hurting my head, so that for awhile I knew nothing.

At last I felt some one lift me off the ground, and opened my eyes to see that it was a great, swarthy, black eyed girl of seventeen or so-a girl with a careless look about her dress which was not ladylike. But she had the voice and manner of a lady, and she asked me very kindly if I were much hurt; and, seeing that 1 was, picked me up in her strong arms and carried me through a garden gate and into a little parlor, where she laid me on a sofa and bathed my head with rose water and told me to keep up my courage, for "Gideon has gone for a doc-

That name told me where I was. I was under a roof that I had never thought would shelter me, no matter what would come to pass. I would have risen and gone away if I could have stirred from the odd old sofa. For this was Gideon Lee's old homestead, and here dwelt the children of the man who, sixteen years before, had been hung for the murder of my Uncle Mathew.

I was but a baby when it all happened. but I could remember how the whole village was astir in search of the missing man, and how a body was found at last in the heart of Alcott's woods, and how the facts that there had been a quarrel between Gideon Lee and Uncle Mathew, and that Gideon Lee owed the latter money, and how they were last seen together quarreling in Gideon's garden, where a bloody handkerchief, marked "M. G.," was found soon after. and brought Gideon to the gallows.

Perhaps hearing the story afterward from my grandfather made me fancy l remembered it, but at all events the name I had learned to hate was that of Gideon Lee. And now it was the child born on the day of her mother's deaththe very day on which the father met his awful fate-who lifted me from the ground, dusky Madge Lee, who had never found a playmate nor a friend in the town because of the ban upon her father's name, and Gideon, the son, who had been old enough to understand it all at the time, who came in with old

Dr. Humphries soon after. They were not poor people. The house was a substantial one, and there were more books and pictures and tokens of refinement within than country homes generally boast of. But even the farm hands spoke contemptuously of the "son of the man who was hung," and the servants who were hired by Madge Lee were not natives of the place.

And here was I, Mathew Grey's own niece, lying under the roof, and likely to be there for some time, for the doctor forbade my removal.

"I must go home—I must go away from this house!" I said, angrily and

And Madge Lee looking down on me as an Indian princess might, with her dark eyes aglow, said, in a bitter voice.
"Never fear, Miss Grey, we'll not mur der you!" and somehow abashed me ughty as I was.

Grandpa was away from home, or i think even the risk of my life would not have kept him from taking me home; and I grew ill and delirious, and Madge Lee nursed me as a sister might, and Gideon was kinder than a brother. He

and he sang, as I never heard any one are lovelier than any other music ever written, to my mind; and it ended in people I ever met; most of all I loved my loving them.

So when I was well enough to go away I took Madge's hand in mine and said, tender care of me?"

And she answered, "Agnes Grey, the only gratitude I ask is belief in us. The people down there" (and she pointed with her brown hand toward the town) 'call us the children of a murderer. We bers his kindness, his tenderness, his gen-

tleness and his honor. "Your uncle Mathew-forgive me, but it is the truth—was a wild, bad fellow. He quarreled with my father, not father with him, and the debt was paid. Mother saw it done, and heard him boast that the money should take him beyond the reach of irksome laws and chattering tongues. And for the bloody handkerchief, he had cut his hand, and unbound and washed it, and tied it up afresh in mother's very sight that day. Don't dare to doubt it; don't be so cruel as to doubt

it, Agnes Grey." Then she brought me the picture that they kept as a sacred relic, and verses written by his hand and tender love letters yellow with age, and as I looked at that those who stood before me, though they were the children of the man who murderer And afterward Gideon also

"It is hard to bear," he said; "hard to know that we must bear it all our lives; but if you only see the truth-if only, without proof, you will understand that we know no murder was ever done by our dear father's hand—we, who have his pictured face upon the wall, the letters written to our mother, the words our mother wrote begging us to read them often when she was dead, and never doubt the man who on his knees in the condemned cell, calling on God to witness his last words, had sworn to the wife who would have loved him even had he in some hasty moment dealt a fatal blow, that he knew nothing of Mathew Grey's death and even doubted with us and not with those who were his murderers, I, at least, shall have a lighter heart."

And I put my hand into his, and gave the other to Madge, and said honestly, "I do believe as you do, and I always

And so I went away; but I took their faces with me, their pleasant ways, their voices. As for Gideon's face, it haunted me. There was about him a charm that no one else ever had. They were all quaint, all charming in their way, but he most of all.

A pretty scandal there was through the town when I began to go down to the farmhouse to see my friends. I knew it, and fought it bravely.

"Gideon Lee never killed any one," I vowed aloud to those who chided me, "I will not ban his children for the fault of others."

But there in the town were those who had been at the trial, and eleven of the Madge who ran to meet me-Madge, jurymen and witnesses; and under a grown to be a magnificent wamanstone in the graveyard were the bones that had been sworn to as Uncle more gladly, and who left me in a mo-Mathew's, and in a bleak, lonely spot ment alone with Gideon and drew the near the prison the coffin of the man who stranger away with her. was hung; and how dared I, a baby almost at the time, to judge for myself.

I knew they were right enough, but I never faltered. I was as sure as Madge was that her father never killed Uncle

They would not come to my home. Indeed, grandfather would have had the door closed in their faces, but nothing could keep me from them. And it was dangerous work for me, too, as I began to know before long, to sit so much by Gideon Lee's side, to hear his dear voice so often, to feel my heart thrilling with a loying pity for him for which I had no words. He was my wounded and des-pised knight, this dear Gideon Lee, be-fore I had known him three months, and I would have given my life for him. But he said no words of love to me nor 1 to him. Just friends we were, and nothing more, ontwardly. That was enough for the town-enough for grandfather. I was called unnatural. I found my dearest friends grown cold. Even the clergyman asked me if "it would not harm me to hold companionship with

And I said: "They are the best people I have ever known. And even had their father done the deed for which he died, they would be no worse for it. As it is he was murdered, and you are all cruel to these poor children of his—cruel and unchristian."

So he left me angrily, and so many a friend left me, and all my comfort was to sit between Madge and Gideon in the quiet evenings and talk to them

In the summer time we used to light no candles, and the moonlight fell through the ivy leaves upon us, and the old dog lay at our feet and put his curly head upon Madge's lap. We would tell stories of fairies and goblins or sing romantic songs written before any of us Now and then Gideon would steal his arm about my waist or hold my hand awhile, and wrong though any one might have thought there was no more harm in it than though we had been children.

Just so we were sitting one evening, when grandfather walked into our midst and clutched me fiercely by the arm.

No need to repeat the words he uttered.

The insults stung me as sharply as they could Gideon Lee's children. But he

forbade me ever to speak to them again and took me home with him. The last glimpse I caught of the broth-er and aister showed them to be stand-ing hand in hand, their fingers clutched tight, their teeth set, their faces white was my last glimpse for many years,

read to me; he brought me cooling drinks for the day after this we sailed for Can-made of fruits after some Oriental rec-ipes which he possessed; he found sweet flowers dripping with dew in the woods, Lees and me that he took the voyage. sing before, those Scottish ballads that But he could not tear my heart from them. I loved them better than any

But I never heard of him or from him, I took Madge's hand in mine and said, nor could I guess whether he lived or "How shall I ever thank you for your died, remembered or forgot me, for three long years.

At the end of that time my grandto my native land a rich woman and my own mistress, though this was the codi-cil to the will that left me all:

are the children of a martyr instead. I "I, Henry Grey, having cause to fear never saw my father, but we both know that my beloved grandchild is easily that he is innocent. And Gideon remem- misled by artful persons, and is not gaileful enough to understand their guile, do, for her own welfare, add this proviso. That, should she ever give her hand in marriage to the son of the murderer of my son, Matthew Grey, all claim upon the moneys and estates above bequeathed her shall be forfeited, and said property go, without reserve, to the Hospital of St. Martha, to be used by the trustees of said institution as they see

But, despite this codicil, I went down into the valley in which Gideon Lee's homestead stood before I had been at home a day. It was sunset when I reached it, but the light did not as of yore gild the panes of the upper windows to sheets of burnished gold. Every shutter was closed and the house seemed the face—so sweet, so good, so like that to frown upon me. The garden had run of the Gideon Lee I knew—I felt sure wild; the fields lay desolate; the broken branches of the orchard trees told of boyish depredation. Strange cattle hung, were not the offspring of a grazed in the meadow and Rover's kennel was empty. The sight brought tears to my eyes. I went up the old porch and found there, wet with rain and tangled in the relics of last year's vine, a scarlet ribbon, one Madge must have worn. I put it in my bosom and came No one could tell me anything of Gideon Lee's children, except what the empty house had told me-that they

> I had lost them; and what did I care that all the country place besides welcomed me home? Gideon's smile would have been more to me than all their greetings, and Madge would have given me a kiss that had true love in it.

I was not happy; I could not be gay. I could not care for anything very much. I lived a quiet life for two long years, that he was dead at all-if you can believe and, let those call me cold and proud who would, I was not cold, but those who courted me were Gideon Lee's enemies, and had persecuted pretty Madge since her very birth, and had done their innocent father to death, and I hated them for it, though I said nothing.

But at last, one bright morning, walking up the road to look at the desolate dwelling where I had learned to love Gideon Lee's children, I saw a change in it. The windows were open; a man was at work in the garden. Three figures in traveling costume had just entered the porch and a carriage stood at the gate.

I knew Gideon's tall figure at a glance, but who was this-superb, glowing, beautiful, with a look of triumph on her face-who came toward me? And who was that old man with the strange, sarcastic smile, that I fancied I had seen before?

As I advanced I knew that it was Madge, who kissed me as of yore, but

And Gideon held my hand, and I could only say, "It has been very long. Gideon," and try and hide my tears.

"It has been long for me, Agnes!" he said. And then there was a pause. He broke it by kneeling down beside me, with my hands in his as I set on the low step of the porch.

"You are Miss Agnes Grey," he said, "and the world honors you. I am the son of the man who was hanged. Even now loving you as I do-as I have all this weary while-that stands between us, a barrier you could not cross. Is it not so? Were I all else, and so worthy of you, I should still be Gideon Lee, and an outcast, branded with Cain's brand upon the forehead, and you could neither love nor wed me!"

Could I say "I love you?" It was not in maidenhood to do that. It was impossible. I trembled; I faltered; I only said these words: "It is an unjust brand -unjust and cruel. My eyes never see it, Gideon Lee!"

He showered fond kisses on my hands,

but he spoke again. "Do you dare to do it, Agnes-to love an outcast man; to bring upon yourself contempt and hate; to relinquish wealth for the humble life of a simple farmer? Is your love strong enough for this? Will you never repent?"

"Never," I said. "When your gold is gone, your land another's, your friends turned to enemies and your name, your very name, Agnes-that of the man who was hanged?" he asked slowly. "Think! can you bear that ignominy? I know how terrible it is."

And I took my hands from his and taid them on his broad shoulders and said-but no matter what I said. I have forgotten the words that told him that I loved him too well to doubt my courage to bear anything for his dear

But suddenly, as he knelt there looking up into my eyes, I saw a look in his face that I could not understand—a look that made me cry out and begin to tremble; and I saw others draw near; and I saw Madge clasp her brother's hand, and the old man held out both of

"We have been parted five years," said Gideon. "In that time I have been searching for something that I believed must be hidden in the wide world. I have found it."

"Gideon, tell me," I cried. "Could any earthly thing but one embolden me to speak as I have spoken to your said Gideon. "Do you think that I would ever have offered any woman a

name that would have made her an out cast? That which I sought, that which I found, was a living proof of my dear father's innocence. Look! do you know this man? Have you no recollection of

And I turned my eyes upon the old man, who had taken my hand in his, and knew that I looked upon my uncle Mathew.

The whole town knows the story now. He has told them how, yielding to his wandering impulses, he left, as he had done once before, the home and friends father died, and I, his heiress, returned of his early manhood, and far from all news of Christian lands dwelt in the Arab's tent upon the desert and wandered with him over the burning sands, loving the life too well to leave it, and never hearing of Gideon Lee's unjust condemnation, or of his terrible fate, until his son stood before him and bade him, if one drop of Christian pity lingered in his soul for the man on whom he had brought this awful doom, to return and prove by his living presence the fact of his innocence and of his unjust death.

They speak of Gideon Lee's children now as of those of a martyr; and the ban is lifted from the name that I have taken for my own.-Buffalo News.



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