

her brown eyes dim with weeping. Giving him to the war seemed like giving him up to death. But women can be as true heroes as men; and stifling her own grief, Maddy sent him away with smiles and prayers, and cheering words of encouragement, turning herself for consolation to the source from which she never sued for peace in vain; and, save that she missed her husband terribly, she was not lonely, for her beautiful dark-eyed boy, whom they called Guy, junior, kept her busy, while not many weeks after her departure, Guy read with moistened eyes of a little golden-haired daughter, whom Maddy had named Lucy Atherstone, and gazed upon a curl of hair she enclosed, asking if it were not like some other hair now mouldering back to dust within an English churchyard. 'Maggie says it is,' she wrote, alluding to the wife of Dr. Holbrook, who had come to Aikenside to stay, while her husband also did duty as surgeon in the army. That little daughter is a year-old baby now, and in her short white dress and coral bracelets sits neglected on the nursery floor, while her mother and Jessie and Maggie Holbrook hasten out into the yard, to welcome the returning soldier, Major Guy, whose arm is in a sling, and whose face is very pale from the effects of wounds received at Gettysburg, where his daring courage had well-nigh won for Maddy a widow's heritage. For the present the arm is disabled, and so he has been discharged, and has come back to the home where warm words of welcome greet him, from the lowest servant up to his darling wife, who can only look her joy as he folds her in his well arm, and kisses her beautiful face. Only Margaret Holbrook seems a little sad, for she had hoped her husband would come with Guy, but his humanity would not permit him to leave the suffering beings who needed his care. Loving messages he sent to her, and her tears were dried when she heard from Guy how greatly he was beloved by the pale occupants of the beds of pain, and how much he was doing to relieve their anguish.

Jessie, grown to be a most beautiful girl of nearly sixteen, is still a child in actions, and, wild with delight at seeing her brother again, throws her arms around his neck, telling, in almost the same breath, how proud she is of him, and how much she wished she could go to him when she heard he was wounded, how she wished she was a boy, so she could enlist, how nicely Flora is, married and settled at the cottage in Honeedale, and then asks if he knows anything of the Confederate Colonel to whom just before the war broke out her mother was married, and whose home was in Richmond.

Guy knows nothing of him, except that he is still fighting for the Confederacy, but from exchanged prisoners who had come in from Richmond, he has heard of a beautiful lady, an officer's wife, and as rumour said, a Northern woman, who visited them in prison, speaking kind words of sympathy to all, and once binding up a drummer boy's aching head with a handkerchief, which he still retained as a memento of her, and on whose corner could be faintly traced the name of 'Agnes Remington.'

Jessie's eyes are full of tears as she says: 'Dear mamma. It's months since I heard from her direct. Of course it was she who was so good to the drummer boy. She cannot be so very bad,' and Jessie glances triumphantly at Mrs. Noah, who, never having quite overcome her dislike of Agnes, had sorely tried Jessie by declaring that her mother 'had found her level at last, and was just where she wanted to be.'

Good Mrs. Noah! The ancient man, whose name she bore, would as soon have thought of leaving the Ark, as she of turning traitor to her country, and when she heard of the riotous mob raised against the draft, she talked seriously of going in person to New York, 'to give 'em a piece of her mind,' and for one whole day refused to speak to Flora's husband, because he was a 'dum democrat,' and she presumed wanted the south to beat.

With the exception of Maddy, no one was more pleased to see Guy than herself. He was her boy, the one she brought up, and with a mother's fervor she kissed his branded cheek, and told him how glad she was to have him back.

With his boy on his sound arm, Guy disengaged himself from the noisy group and went with Maddy to where the child he had never seen was just beginning to show signs of resentment at being left so long alone.

'Lulu, sissy, papa's come; this is papa,' the little boy cried, assuming the honour of the introduction.

Lulu, as they called her, was not afraid of the tall soldier, and stretching out her fat, white hands, went to him readily. Blue-eyed and golden-haired, she bore but little resemblance to either father or mother, but there was a sweet, beautiful face, of which Maddy had often dreamed, but never seen, and whether it were fancy or not, Guy thought it beamed upon him again in the infantile features of his little girl. Parting lovingly her yellow curls and kissing her fair cheek, he said to Maddy softly, just as he always spoke of that dead one:

'Yes, darling, Margaret Holbrook is right—our baby daughter is very much like our dear lost Lucy Atherstone.'