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## Poetry.

### SERENADE.

Sleep sweet, beloved one, sleep sweet!  
Without here night is growing;  
The dead leaf falls, the dark boughs meet,  
And a chill wind is blowing.  
Strange shapes are stirring in the night  
To the deep breeze' wailing,  
And slow, with wistful gleams of light,  
The storm-tossed moon is sailing.

Sleep sweet, beloved one, sleep sweet!  
Fold thy white hands, my blossom!  
Thy warm limbs in thy lily sheet,  
Thy hands upon thy bosom.  
Though evil thoughts may walk the dark,  
Not one shall rear thy chamber,  
But dreams divine shall pause to mark  
Singing to lutes of amber.

Sleep sweet, beloved one, sleep sweet!  
Though, on thy bosom creeping,  
God's hand is laid to feel the beat  
Of thy soft heart in sleeping.  
The brother angels, Sleep and Death,  
Sleep by thy couch and eye thee;  
And Sleep stoops down to drink thy breath,  
While Death goes softly by thee!

## LITERATURE.

### WILD-CAT JIM.

Or, How my Grandmother Suppressed an Insurrection.

I shall not attempt to deny the fact that my grandfather, Prudence Hasall, "wore the breeches" over my grandmother, who answered to the name of Josiah. He was short, fleshy, good-natured, lazy, and could only be aroused by some occasional event. My grandmother, on the contrary, was tall, spare, always scolding, active, and had the ambition of a politician.

Twenty years ago, when almost every New England family had a touch of "Western fever," she looked across the dinner-table at Josiah one day, and commanded:

"Josiah, sell the farm, and we will remove to Iowa."

Just what grandfather said in reply I do not know, but in two weeks he had sold the farm, disposed of his personal property, shaken hands all around, and man and wife were on their way to the West.

"Josiah, buy this house and four acres of land," commanded Prudence, as the couple halted at the county seat of a new county in the northern part of the State.

Again I do not know what grandfather replied, but he made the purchase. Grandmother intended, ultimately, to command grandfather to purchase a farm, but she saw a speculation in buying this property, and beside, knew that nothing would be lost in waiting to look around a little.

"Josiah, take the nomination for sheriff," commanded Prudence, when a delegation waited upon grandfather one day, a few months after his arrival, and informed him that he had been selected as their party candidate for the office named.

Now, my grandmother was just the wrong man to make a good sheriff, especially in that wild district, the home of horse-thieves, counterfeiters, highwaymen and murderers, and he knew his failings. But, when Prudence commanded, he was Josiah's duty to obey, and a week afterwards he had been duly elected county sheriff.

There was some dignity attached to the position, the salary was fair, the jailor had his rent and fuel gratis, and the duties were not so laborious as farm work. My grandmother had thought these things all over, and had planned just how everything should be carried out. She knew that her husband was too good-natured to prosecute a thief, too lazy to catch one, and so, one day, after moving into new quarters, she coolly remarked:

"Josiah, appoint John Granger your first deputy, and also make him assistant jailor."

Two hours after the appointment had been made, the deputy was in possession of his office. Granger was almost a giant in height and weight, was as brave as a lion, had been deputy under the previous administration, and had the name of being the best thief-catcher in the county. My grandmother knew that grandfather could only hold the position in name, for reasons before given, and she had wisely selected Granger, who was a single man, and could, therefore, become an inmate of the family.

The jail was about the only stone building in the county, and it was a good one. The Board of Supervisors had felt the need of some strong place in which to confine the desperate characters hovering around Palmyra, and had accordingly been liberal with the county funds. It was a two-story structure, with a wing for the jailor's family, the second story for females and boys, and thirteen stout cells on the ground floor. Three cells were all in a row, with a ten foot corridor in front. An

iron door led out into a large hall, which was also a reception-room. Stairs led from this hall to the second story, there was an office at one end, a wash-room at the other, and then a small hall led into the wing. The door of this little hall was very heavy, and stout, and was always kept locked. All the water, provisions, and so forth, were brought in from the wing through this door. Taken altogether, the jail was a strong one, and grandfather and Granger had their own way about conducting it.

The building held two or three prisoners only when my grandfather took possession, but about a month after that event, eleven of the ground cells were occupied by as desperate a set of men as ever looked through the grates. Three were there on charge of murder, four for highway robbery, and the other four were professional horse-thieves. All were waiting for the session of court, which would result in their being sent to a stronger prison.

One day, while grandfather was wondering who the twelfth man would be, he came in. What his real name was no one knew. He was known all over the State as "Wild-Cat Jim," and was the most daring, reckless, hardened criminal that ever red the State, which is giving him a big puff. He was suspected of half a dozen murders, he had been in prison for highway robbery, he confessed to having stolen upwards of thirty horses, and there was a county and State reward on his head when arrested. He was brought in by four men, and they had him roped and chained until there was no chance for him to move a limb. They carried him in from the wagon, laid him down in the corridor, and after untying him, forced him into a cell at the muzzle of a revolver.

"There's Wild-Cat Jim!" was shouted by half a dozen men as they heard the sound of his voice; a dozen Jim's laughed loud and long.

"Ha! ha! ha!" he roared, slapping his legs as if well pleased. "I'll stay and take two or three meals with you, rest up a bit, and then I'll walk out of your confounded shanty!"

He really meant what he said, but John Granger had contrary ideas on the subject of his walking out. He knew the man, realized what a desperate villain he was, and proposed to keep an eye on him.

The next day after Wild-Cat Jim came in, I arrived at the jail, to pay my relatives a visit. My parents were living in a town about a dozen miles away, and I had permission to remain as long as might suit me. I was then about nine years old, and did not know, and could not be made to fully understand the character of the prisoners in the cells. While I was allowed full liberty to roam about the building alone, even to going down to the main hall, I was cautioned by both grandfather and Granger not to hold any conversation with the prisoners, much less to pass any article to them through the grated door.

It was Granger's habit to allow the prisoners the freedom of their corridor during the day, the men walking up and down reading novels, playing cards, and passing the time as they liked best. There was but one small window in the corridor, the walls were very massive, the door firm, and there was no danger. Wild-Cat Jim was not allowed to leave his cell at first, Granger knowing that he would attempt to take some advantage of the favor. But, after a week had passed away without sign that the villain had a hope of leaving the place, his appeals were listened to by my grandfather, who persuaded Granger into throwing open the cell door.

"He may not be so bad as people make out," remarked Josiah, who always pitied where others condemned. "And if he is as desperate a devil as you say he is, I do not see how he can do any mischief."

Therefore, Jim's cell door was unlocked, and he was allowed to mingle with the rest. As grandfather said nothing in opposition, Granger insisted that the villain should continue to wear his shackles, which were of course something of a safeguard against his escaping. He seemed to have no care whether the shackles were on or off, having assumed the role of a penitent, declaring his intention to reform.

"Look out for that man, John Granger!" cautioned my grandmother, as she looked through the door and caught a glance from the desperado.

The man had been in jail about ten days, and his conduct so far had been all that could be desired. Granger believed that he was plotting his escape; grandfather thought him a much abused man, and grandmother gave no opinion. One Monday morning it became necessary for Granger to make a days journey into another county, and this would leave no one but my two relatives as a guard. My grandmother was cautioned to look out, as the prisoners might attempt an insurrection and an escape; and, for a wonder, he gave the warning attention. He had two revolvers and two rifles in the jail, and he loaded them all. One of the revolvers he put into his pocket, and the other arms were left in the sitting room.

During the forenoon it was discovered that the corridor door was out of order, and grandfather set

to work to fix it. Taking a small saw, two files and a hammer, he went at the difficulty, and soon had the door in repair. When through, he placed the tools on a stool in the hall, and went about his work, leaving them there.

Near the middle of the afternoon, having seen that everything was quiet with the prisoners, Josiah laid down for a nap, telling his wife to take an occasional look into the hall. Left to myself, I wandered into the hall, and boylike, began using the tools. The attention of the prisoners was soon attracted, and a voice called me to the door.

"Bub, do you want a whole pound of candy?" inquired Jim, smiling, and trying to look sweet.

Of course I did; whoever saw a boy that didn't?

I had not only forgotten the oft-repeated warning not to talk with the prisoners, and leaned against the door, in hopes to see the candy.

Well, sonny, continued Jim, if you will be a good boy, you shall have all the candy you can carry. You see, you are too small a boy to have those tools, and if your grandfather knew of it, he would whip you to death. Just hand them to me through the door, and then he won't know that you have been dallying them. And beside, I'll go down to-morrow and get you all the candy you can eat.

I hesitated for a time, but, convinced that my grandfather would scold, if not whip, and being bribed by the candy bait, I passed in the tools. I yet remember how the prisoners crowded around Jim, shook hands, laughed and danced, but I did not then see any occasion for their demonstrations.

Now, bub, said Jim, returning to the door, you have completely spoiled these tools, and your grandfather will skin you and hang your hide on the fence, if he finds it out. If he asks you where they went, tell him you don't know.

I never had cause to fear either of my kind-hearted relatives, but Jim's words really frightened me. He made further promises about the candy, and I finally went away to the sitting room, determined to tell grandfather a lie if he asked me about the articles.

But he did not ask. He went about his duties after his nap without once thinking of the tools, so of course I did not broach the subject. Granger did not return at night, as intended, but word came from him that it would take another day to conclude his business.

As you will be alone all night, the note read, let me warn you again to look out for Wild-Cat Jim. He will take this opportunity to make you trouble.

Poor! poor! I replied my grandfather as he read the note; Granger is a very active officer, but he is a regular old woman with his whims. I guess I shan't have any trouble with Jim.

And the guess was correct as his guesses usually were.

The night wore away without any disturbance to create alarm. Josiah had taken the pains to see that the locks, doors and bars were all right, and he slept as soundly as a soldier. Each man had been locked in his cell, and the corridor door was a mountain in the path of any attempt at escape.

Prudence, as we were seated at breakfast, did you hear any noise during the night?

Not so much as the sigh of a mouse, replied Josiah. It was a remarkably still night.

Well, Josiah, on inquired my grandmother, I heard noise, and plenty of them. There was some devilry going on among the prisoners, I heard a grating sound, as if they were filing off bars. I want to go down with you and see what it was.

My grandfather made no objections, knowing that words could not alter the decision, so after breakfast we passed through into the main hall. Just as Josiah was about to open the corridor door, there was a loud shouting from a female occupying a cell up stairs, and Prudence went up to learn the cause. She was hardly out of sight when Josiah opened the door and went in. I saw him feeling about his person, heard him say "P-haw?" but did not then know that he had forgotten his revolver. While I remained by the door, he went down to cell No. 12, unlocked the padlock, but left it in the staple. He then came along back, serving each door in the same way. This was one of Granger's ideas, he letting out the occupant of cell No. 1, and making him let out the rest. Before the second man was out, the turn key would be outside the hall door. Well, Josiah pulled out the padlock from the staple of No. 1, threw open the door and the next moment was knocked clear across the corridor, while all the prisoners set up a yelling and shouting. Had grandfather been armed he would have been all right, as the prisoner waited to open the next cell before further attack. He then leaped upon grandfather, held him down, and the other men ran from cell to cell to throw off the padlocks.

Shoot the door and lock it, Frank! shouted Josiah, as he saw that an insurrection was to occur; and then ran and told grandmother.

I obeyed him, though terribly frightened, and then hastened up stairs, meeting grandmother at the head, carrying one of the rifles. She heard the struggle, and knew just what it

meant. As she stepped upon the stairs, there was a wild yell, a great clatter, and the corridor door was taken off its hinges. As after wards ascertained, the rascals had used the tools with such vigor that the hinges of the door had been almost filed off, and any other man than grandfather must have noticed the work.

Well, the whole twelve came bounding into the hall, having secured my grandfather in a cell, feeling confident that they had only to force the front door to make their escape. Prudence stood on the stairs in plain view of the villains, and they yelled again as they saw her.

Hold on, there! she shouted, bringing the rifle to her shoulder as a sport-man does when about to make an off hand shot. The first man who comes a step nearer will get a bullet in his heart!

Tall, fierce looking, and armed with a deadly weapon, the woman must have seemed like a determined obstacle in the way of escape for the rascals halted in an instant. Still keeping the gun leveled at the crowd, and never once looking at me, my grandmother whispered:

Frank, go down to the sitting room, and bring me up that big revolver. You'll find it in the bottom drawer of the bureau. Be sure and get the big one, and run for your life!

The brave woman, while looking the desperadoes in the face, and expecting a rush every moment, had noticed that the percussion cap had dropped from the nipple, and she was yet cool enough to whisper what she did.

I ran with all my might, jerked open the drawer, laid hold of the "Clit," which was a six shooter, and in a moment was back again. The gang had recovered from their surprise, and having but little fear of the rifle (in the hands of a faint away female, they thought), they made a rush for the stairs just as I handed grandmother the weapon. Click! click! went the hammer, there was a yell, a report, and the man who was one third the way up the stairs went rolling down, killed dead by a bullet through his head.

As the smoke lifted, I caught a glimpse of grandmother's face, and it frightened me more than the yell and the shooting. Her eyes were blazing, her teeth set hard, her hair down, blood oozing from her mouth, coming from her bitten lips, and I never since have seen such a sight.

Go back! Go back to your cells this moment! she shouted, descending a step or two, and aiming the revolver at the head of the nearest man.

The gang fell back, back until they were half way down the hall, and then they stopped. Wild-Cat Jim had given the word, and they were going to try it again.

See here, old woman, shouted Jim, raising his fist at her, we'll murder you for this! We didn't want to hurt you, but now we'll roast you alive on the stove.

She was on the middle stair, and I at the head. Without moving her head or betraying the least emotion in her voice, she whispered to me once more:

Frank, if the men get me, do you shut and lock the door, run in to the sitting room, lock that door, and then run into the street and tell the men that the prisoners are loose. If you don't do this they will kill you!

The gang were shouting and shaking their fists, furious at being foiled by a woman, and then in a moment every eye was still. They were going to rush.

Come on, boys! Don't spare her! shouted Wild-Cat Jim, and they rushed. They reached the stairs, came bounding up, and then there was a report, followed by another, and then every thing was still again—everything except the sickening bump! bump! of two dead bodies as they fell from step to step.

The smoke cleared off after a moment, and I saw three dead bodies at the foot of the stairs, and the blanching faces of the nine desperadoes half way down the hall. My grandmother had only been acting on the defence as yet; she now prepared to become the attack party. Walking slowly down the stairs, her eyes looking like blazing coals, her lips covered with blood and foam, and the smoking revolver held ready for use, she stepped over the bodies, advanced to within five feet of the nearest man, and said, her voice sounding like a sharp hiss:

Get back, dogs! Get back into the corridor! The man who stands here, after I have counted ten will become a corpse.

I did not faint away, but I came very near it. Clutching the railing for support, I was so blind for a moment that I could not see the figures in the hall, but I could hear the clear voice of grandmother crying out:

One—two—three—four—

She did not count further. The pale faces grew paler, the villains trembled, and they all rushed for the corridor at once. Grandmother followed them to the door, saw that her husband had been locked up, and she commanded:

Each man of you enter your cell and shut the door! I give you just one minute to obey. In less than thirty seconds every prisoner was in his cell. Prudence then went from

cell to cell, dropped in the padlocks, then opened the one which Josiah occupied, and he walked out. His face was as white as the paper I write on, and he looked at her in such a vacant way that one would have thought he was crazy or dreaming. But he was only amazed. He had heard all, realized all, and could not comprehend it.

Josiah, lock those doors, and then go and get Coroner Martin, commanded Prudence, turning to go out. Tell him also to bring Mr. Dakin the undertaker.

The woman then sat down in a chair, told her story to the astonished crowd which soon came in, and went through the whole excitement without a flinch. When all was over, she went into the sitting room, had a fit of hysterics as a recreation, and in half an hour was around getting the dinner ready. She had no care for the laudations of the public.

The Barnabys came of a fighting stock, was her reply. Some starved at Valley Forge, some fell at Bunker Hill, one fought under Paul Jones, and the blood hasn't turned to water yet!

Poor! poor! replied my grandfather, when he saw that Josiah had no hand in the victory. Prudence is good for any twelve rascals in the county when she has a fair chance, and I know it!

Each one of the killed was shot dead, Wild-Cat Jim through the heart, and the other two in the forehead. Grandfather wanted to resign his position at once, but the wife would not listen to it, and he (she) was sheriff until the politicians succeeded in doing what the dare devil prisoners could not do.

THE TRAVELLER'S ALPHABET.—The players sit in a circle, or round a table. The first one starts by saying to his left-hand neighbor, "I am going to America," or any other place commencing with A. The one so addressed will turn to his or her left-hand neighbor, and ask, "What will you do there?" The reply must come prompt from the third one, "Ask for apples," or anything commencing with A. In every instance the verbs and nouns must commence with the letter the traveller is journeying to; for instance: "I am going to Bath. What will you do there? Bath-baby. I am going to China. What will you do there? C on China. I am going to Dorer. What will you do there? Dore-dorp. And so throughout the alphabet. Should a player hesitate while five be counted, a forfeit is the result; also if any mistake is made in following with the right letter.

AN INGENIOUS DEFENCE.—In the police court at Chicago, a few weeks since, a wife thus ingeniously explained away serious charges of harsh treatment of her poor husband: "One day when she was running across the room with a fork in her hand, he jumped in the way and struck her wrist against the fork, wrenching it from her by the prongs, which he ran into his wrist. Then, he endeavored to strike her but she held up a pan of hot dabs water between them, and he spilled it all over his head. Then he got still more angry at this accident, and started to jump at her, but his head came against her hand, and he fell down. She took hold of his hair to raise him up, and the hair was so moistened by the water that it came off. Then she saw it was no use to reason with him any longer, so she left the house."

A NEW REVELATION.—A little girl had seen her brother playing with his burning glass, and heard him talk about the "focus." Not knowing what the word "focus" meant, she consulted the dictionary and found that the focus was "the place where the rays meet." At dinner, when the family were assembled, she announced, "as grand as could be" that she knew the meaning of one hard word. Her father asked her what it was. She said it was the word "focus."

"Well, Mary," said he, "what does that mean?"

"Why," she replied, "it means a place where they raise calves."

This, of course, raised a great laugh. But she stuck to her point, and produced her dictionary to prove that she was right.

"There, said she, triumphantly, 'Focus'—a place where the rays meet. Calves are meat, and if they raise meat they raise calves. And so I am right, ain't I, father?"

"That is the sweetest belle in the city," said Fine ear, as the vibrations reached his ear from a neighboring church tower. A pretty girl who was passing acknowledged the compliment with a blush and a languishing smile, while he murmured, "He is very bold in his compliments for a stranger; but it is nice to be appreciated." Fine ear doesn't know to this day why he received so melting a smile from that pretty young lady.

A confirmed old toper soliloquizes: "They say whisky is a curse. And they say brandy is a curse. And they say tobacco is another curse. Well, I wish all those curses would come home to roost, and roost low, at that, so as I could pull 'em' down whenever I wanted 'em."