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Gabriel and the Hour Book (Yesterday's Classics)

Evaleen Stein

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Gabriel and the Hour Book (Yesterday's Classics) Evaleen Stein
Relates the story of the making of an "hour book" as a wedding gift from King Louis of France to Lady Anne of Brittany and the good fortune it brought to little Gabriel, Brother Stephen's color grinder. Inspired by the bunch of violets and cuckoo-buds Gabriel brings into the workroom, Brother Stephen conceives a new idea for an illuminated border. Instead of painting the border with scrolls and birds and flowers in the conventional way, he would decorate the book with borders of gold on which he would paint in realistic fashion the meadow wildflowers, and bees and butterflies, and all the little flying creatures. As Brother Stephen's color grinder, Gabriel makes the ink, grinds the gold, gathers the flowers, and prepares the colors for him. After the book is completed, Gabriel slips into the book a sheet on which he has penned a prayer to Lady Anne: "I, Gabriel Viaud, am Brother Stephen's colour-grinder; and I have made the ink for this book, and the glue, and caught the eels, and ground the gold and colours, and ruled the lines and gathered the flowers for the borders, and so I pray the Lord God will be kind and let my father out of prison in Count Pierre's castle, and tell Count Pierre to give us back our meadow and sheep, for we cannot pay the tax, and mother says we will starve." How his prayer is answered unfolds in the ensuing chapters. Evaleen Stein brings the medieval world to life for younger students through her stories set in the Middle Ages. A century ago when this book was first published, a reviewer in the Louisville Daily Courier wrote, "No works in juvenile fiction contain so many of the elements that stir the hearts of children and grown-ups as well as do the stories so admirably told by this author."

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