

For The Amaranth.

THE STAR SPIRIT.

It was a beautiful evening in June, that I was walking on the border of a calm, clear lake. Everything around me was still, save the hum of the green leaves as they whispered their love tales to each other. There was not a breath of air to disturb the waters of the lake, or even to raise a ripple on its surface. I felt a solemn sadness stealing over my mind, making it more in unison with the repose of nature, when suddenly there came, as if it was borne on the wings of a strong zephyr, a strain of most delicious music. It sounded like nothing earthly, and I felt as if I was listening to the dying song of a departing spirit. I held my breath, for fear I should lose a note of those dirge-like tones; at last they ceased, I could not hear even a faint echo;—all was again still.

I walked on, trying in vain, to account for the sweet notes I had heard, when again the silence was interrupted. This time it was a voice sighing out in a tone of hopeless misery; "Oh! that I was a mortal." I looked around me on all sides, to discover from whence this plaintive voice proceeded—but I perceived nothing. At last I chanced to cast my eyes toward the heavens, where I saw floating on a silver cloud, a figure of surpassing beauty.—The voice continued—

"Oh! that I was a mortal, how happy mortals are, they have a bright and beautiful world which is ever presenting something new to them, while we, poor star spirits, are doomed to take the same course, year after year, and century after century!"

As the spirit thus spoke, I saw going towards her, an old man of majestic appearance, a long white beard flowed nearly to his waist, and to his countenance an air of wisdom that well became him. With a pale, sad smile, he said to the star spirit—

"Daughter, whatever your wish is, I can grant it, but should your mind change, I never can recall you to the place you now hold, if you become a mortal, you must take upon yourself all the cares and troubles of a mortal's life. Pause, consider well, before you speak."

"No, no, I have considered, make me a mortal, it is all I wish, I will be content."

"Daughter," said the sage, and his voice trembled as he spoke; "you know not what an unhappy lot you chose. Will you leave your home in the pure blue sky, to find one in this cold world; will you leave the band of your

smiling sister spirits, to encounter the frowning brows of mortals? Will you give up your immortality, for the uncertain term of a mortal's life?"

"I am prepared for every trouble, I am willing to make every sacrifice," said the wayward spirit, "give me mortality, and you will find me equal to sustain all the cares of an earthly existence."

"Your wish is granted," said the old man, "and erring, but beautiful child of the sky, may your hopes of happiness be as easily realized."

His voice had scarcely ceased, before, swift as the wind, a cloud bore the spirit towards me; for a few moments I saw nothing but the cloud, when it rolled silently away, and the sweet childish form of the spirit alone remained.

I took the beautiful stranger to my home, and my father was no less charmed with her than myself. Her story was told to an old friend of my father's, and he adopted the fair girl as his daughter. By this adoption she was at once placed in the enjoyment of every luxury that wealth and taste could command.—Knowing her mysterious origin as I did, my readers will not wonder that I took a deep interest in her happiness. A short time previous, I had lost my only and beloved sister, and my aching heart had found nothing to fill the void her loss occasioned. But immediately my thoughts were turned into a new channel.—The situation of our families brought me into close companionship with Estelle,—for so we named the beautiful spirit,—and such a joyous, light-hearted being, almost made me forget sorrow. In appearance she was about fifteen; beauty ever seemed to hover around her. She was simple, open-hearted, and confiding, possessing the most exquisite susceptibility I ever knew. I loved her more tenderly for her mysterious origin, although in our intercourse, no allusion was made to my knowledge of it—how I longed to have her find the venerable seer's prediction of sorrow, unfulfilled. Years passed away, and no shadow of care came over her delicate spirit. She was educated with unwonted care, and her comprehensive mind grasped with perfect ease, the whole circle of attainments, which many minds of ordinary powers, regarded as quite beyond their reach.—She played exquisitely upon the harp, and when her soft voice accompanied her instrument in some melancholy ballad of the olden time, my thoughts went back to the sad music which was the forerunner of her introduction to this cold world.