

momentary pause, "and richly will I requite your kindness by making you heir to my treasures! In yonder large deal box are the volumes of my illustrious ancestor, of which I alone am the fortunate possessor. Inherit them, ponder over them, and be wise!"

10. He grew faint with the exertion he had made, and sunk back almost breathless on his pillow. His hand, which, inspired with the importance of his subject, he had raised to my grandfather's arm, slipped from his hold and fell over the side of the bed, and his faithful dog licked it, as if anxious to soothe the last moments of his dying master and testify his gratitude to the hand that had so often cherished him. The untaught caresses of the faithful animal were not lost upon his dying master: he raised his languid eyes, turned them on the dog, then on my grandfather; and having given this silent recommendation—closed them forever.

11. The remains of the little man in black, notwithstanding the objections of many pious people, were decently interred in the church-yard of the village; and his spirit, harmless as the body it once animated, has never been known to molest a living being. My grandfather complied, as far as possible, with his last request: he conveyed the volumes of *Linkum Fidelius* to his library; he pondered over them frequently; but whether he grew wiser, the tradition¹ doth not mention. This much is certain, that his kindness to the poor descendant of *Fidelius* was amply rewarded by the approbation of his own heart, and the devoted attachment of the old turnspit, who transferred his affection from his deceased master to his benefactor, and became his constant attendant. And thus was the Cockloft library first enriched by the invaluable folios² of the sage *LINKUM FIDELIUS*.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

¹ Tradition (tra dīsh' un), some story or report that is handed down from father to son, or from age to age, by word of mouth, not in writing.—² Folios (fō' le oz), books of two leaves to a sheet: large books.



135. THE MAY QUEEN.

I.

YOU must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear:
To-morrow 'll be the happiest time of all the glad New-year—
Of all the glad New-year, mother, the maddest, merriest day;
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

II.

There's many a black, black eye, they say, but none so bright as
mine:
There's Margaret and Mary, there's Kate and Caroline;
But none so fair as little Alice in all the land, they say;
So I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

III.

I sleep so sound all night, mother, that I shall never wake,
If you do not call me loud when the day begins to break;
But I must gather knots of flowers, and buds, and garlands gay,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

IV.

Little Effie shall go with me to-morrow to the green,
And you'll be there too, mother, to see me made the Queen;
For the shepherd-lads on every side 'ill come from far away,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

V.

The honeysuckle round the porch has woven its wavy bowers,
And by the meadow-trenches blow the faint, sweet cuckoo-flowers;
And the wild marsh-marigold shines like fire in swamps and hol-
lows gray,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

VI.

The night-winds come and go, mother, upon the meadow-grass,
And the happy stars above them seem to brighten as they pass:
There will not be a drop of rain the whole of the live-long day,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

VII.

All the valley, mother, 'ill be fresh and green and still,
And the cowslip and the crowfoot are over all the hill,
And the rivulet in the flowery dale 'ill merrily glance and play,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

VIII.

So you must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear:
To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year;
To-morrow 'ill be, of all the year, the maddest, merriest day,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

136. THE MAY QUEEN—CONTINUED.

NEW-YEAR'S EVE.

I.

IF you're waking, call me early, call me early, mother dear.
For I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year:
It is the last New-year that I shall ever see,
Then you may lay me low i' the mold, and think no more of me.

II.

To-night I saw the sun set: he set, and left behind
The good old year, the dear old time, and all my peace of mind;
And the New-year's coming up, mother, but I shall never see
The blossom on the blackthorn, the leaf upon the tree.



III.

Last May we made a crown of flowers; we had a merry day:
Beneath the hawthorn on the green they made me Queen of May;
And we danced about the May-pole and in the hazel copse,
Till Charles's Wain¹ came out above the tall white chimney-tops.

¹ Wain, a wagon: Charles's Wain, the name of a constellation, or cluster of stars.

IV.

There's not a flower on all the hills: the frōst is on the pane:
I only wish to live till the snowdrops come again:
I wish the snow would melt, and the sun come out on high:
I lōng to see a flower so before the day I die.

V.

The building rook 'ill caw from the windy, tall elm-tree,
And the tufted plover¹ pipe aļōng the fällōw lea,
And the swallow 'ill come back again wifh summer o'er the wave,—
But I shall lie aļōne, mother, within the moldering grave.

VI.

Upon the chancel-casement, and upon that grave of mine,
In the early, early morning, the summer sun 'ill shine,
Before the red cock crows from the barn upon the hill,
When you are warm asleep, mother, and all the world is still.

VII.

When the flowers come again, mother, beneath the waning light,
You'll never see me more in the lōng, gray fields at night;
When from the dry, dark wōld² the summer airs blow cool,
On the oat-grass and the sword-grass, and the bulrush in the pool.

VIII.

You'll bury me, my mother, just beneath the hawthorn shade,
And you'll come sometimes and see me where I am lowly laid.
I shall not forgēt you, mother; I shall hear you when you pass,
Wifh your feet above my head in the lōng and pleasant grass.

IX.

I have been wild and wayward, but you'll forgive me now;
You'll kiss me, my own mother, upon my cheek and brow:
Nay, nay, you must not weep, nor let your grief be wild,
You should not fret for me, mother,—you have another child.

X.

If I can I'll come again, mother, from out my resting-place:
Though you'll not see me, mother, I shall look upon your face;

¹ Plover (plūv' er), a water-fowl; the lapwing.—² Wōld, a plain, open country; ridges of high land.

Though I can not speak a word, I shall hearken what you say,
And be ōften, often wifh you, when you think I'm far away.

XI.

Good-night, good-night, when I have said good-night for evermore,
And you see me carried out from the threshold of the door;
Don't let Effie come to see me till my grave be growing green:
She'll be a better child to you than ever I have been.

XII.

She'll find my garden tools upon the grānary floor:
Let her take them—they are hers—I shall never garden more;
But tell her, when I'm gōne, to train the rose-bush that I set
About the parlor-windōw and the box of mignonette.¹

XIII.

Good-night, sweet mother: call me before the day is born.
All night I lie awake, but I fall asleep at morn;
But I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year,
So, if you're waking, call me, call me early, mother dear.

137. THE MAY QUEEN—CONCLUDED.

I.

I THOUGHT to pass away before, and yēt alive I am;
And in the fields all round I hear the blēating of the lamb.
How sadly, I remember, rose the morning of the year!
To die before the snowdrop came, and now the vīōlet's here.

II.

Oh sweet is the new vīōlet, that comes beneath the skies,
And sweeter is the young lamb's voice to me that can not rise,
And sweet is all the land about, and all the flowers that blow,
And sweeter far is death than life to me that lōng to go.

III.

It seemed so hard at first, mother, to leave the blessèd sun,
And now it seems as hard to stay; and yēt, His will be done!
But still I think it can't be lōng before I find release;
And that good man, the clergyman, has told me words of peace.

¹ Mignonette (mīn yo nēt'), a plant and flower prized for its sweet smell.

IV.

Oh, blessings on his kindly voice, and on his silver hair!
 And blessings on his whole life long, until he meet me there!
 Oh, blessings on his kindly heart, and on his silver head!
 A thousand times I blest him as he knelt beside my bed.

V.

He showed me all the mercy, for he taught me all the sin:
 Now, though my lamp was lighted late, there's One will let me in:
 Nor would I now be well, mother, again, if that could be,
 For my desire is but to pass to Him that died for me.



VI.

I did not hear the dog howl, mother, or the death-watch' beat,
 There came a sweeter token when the night and morning meet:
 But sit beside my bed, mother, and put your hand in mine,
 And Effie on the other side, and I will tell the sign.

¹ Death-watch (dèth' wòtch), a small beetle, whose noise, like the tick of a watch, is falsely thought to foretell death.

VII.

All in the wild March-morning I heard the angels call;
 It was when the moon was setting, and the dark was over all;
 The trees began to whisper, and the wind began to roll,
 And in the wild March-morning I heard them call my soul.

VIII.

For, lying broad awake, I thought of you and Effie dear;
 I saw you sitting in the house, and I no longer here;
 With all my strength I prayed for both, and so I felt resigned,
 And up the valley came a swell of music on the wind.

IX.

I thought that it was fancy, and I listened in my bed,
 And then did something speak to me: I know not what was said;
 For great delight and shuddering took hold of all my mind,
 And up the valley came again the music of the wind.

X.

But you were sleeping; and I said, "It's not for them: it's mine."
 And if it comes three times, I thought, I take it for a sign.
 And once again it came, and close beside the window-bars,
 Then seemed to go right up to heaven, and die among the stars.

XI.

So now I think my time is near. I trust it is. I know
 The blessed music went that way my soul will have to go.
 And for myself, indeed, I care not if I go to-day.
 But, Effie, you must comfort *her* when I am pass'd away.

XII.

And say to Robin a kind word, and tell him not to fret;
 There's many worthier than I would make him happy yet.
 If I had lived—I can not tell—I might have been his wife;
 But all these things have ceased to be, with my desire of life.

XIII.

Oh look! the sun begins to rise, the heavens are in a glow,
 He shines upon a hundred fields, and all of them I know.
 And there I move no longer now, and there his light may shine—
 Wild flowers in the valley for other hands than mine.

XIV.

Oh, sweet and strange it seems to me, that ere this day is done,
The voice that now is speaking may be beyond the sun—
Forever and forever with those just souls and true—
And what is life, that we should moan? why make we such ado?

XV.

Forever and forever, all in a blessèd home—
And there to wait a little while till you and Effie come;
To lie within the light of Gōd, as I lie upon your breast—
And the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

TENNYSON.



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