

**DREAM LIFE: A  
FABLE OF THE  
SEASONS; PP.1-269**

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Dream Life: A Fable of the Seasons; pp.1-269 by Jk. Marvel

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**JK. MARVEL**

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# DREAM LIFE:

A

## *FABLE OF THE SEASONS.*

By Jk. Marvel.

— *We are rich stuff*  
*As dreams are made of, and our little life*  
*Is rounded with a sleep.* —*THEOPHAST.*

A NEW EDITION.

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### *A NEW PREFACE.*

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**T**WELVE years ago, this autumn, when I had finished the concluding chapters of this little book, I wrote a letter of Dedication to Washington Irving, and forwarding it by mail to Sunnyside, begged his permission to print it. I think I shall gratify a rational curiosity of my readers (however much they may condemn my vanity) if I give his reply in full :

“MY DEAR SIR,

“Though I have a great disinclination in general to be the object of literary oblations and compliments, yet in the present instance, I have enjoyed your writings with such peculiar relish, and been so drawn toward the author by the qualities of head and heart evinced in them, that

"I confess I feel gratified by a dedication, over  
 "flattering as I may deem it, which may serve as  
 "an outward sign that we are cordially linked to-  
 "gether in sympathies and friendship.

"I would only suggest that in your dedication  
 "you would omit the LL.D., a learned dignity  
 "urged upon me very much 'against the stomach  
 "of my sense,' and to which I have never laid  
 "claim.

"Ever, my dear Sir,

"Yours, very truly,

"WASHINGTON IRVING.

"SUNNYSIDE, Nov. 1851."

I had been personally presented to Mr. Irving for the first time, only a year before, under the introduction of my good friend, Mr. Clark (the veteran Editor of the old *Kuickerbocker* in its palmy days). Thereafter I had met him from time to time, and had paid a charming visit to his delightful home of Sunnyside. But it was after the date of the publication of this book, and during the summer of 1852, that I saw Mr. Irving more familiarly, and came to appreciate more fully that charming *bonhomie*, and geniality in his character, which we all recognize so



constantly in his writings. And if I set down here a few recollections of that pleasant intercourse, they will, I am sure, more than make good the place of the old letter of Dedication, and will serve to keep alive the association I wish to cherish, between my little book, and the name of the distinguished author who so kindly showed me his favor.

For the first time, after many years, Mr. Irving made a stay of a few weeks at Saratoga, in the summer of 1852: by good fortune, I chanced to occupy a room upon the same corridor of the hotel, within a few doors of his, and shared very many of his early morning walks to the "Spring." What at once struck me very forcibly in the course of these walks, was the rare alertness and minuteness of his observation; not a fair young face could dash past us in its drapery of muslin, but the eye of the old gentleman drank in all its freshness and beauty, with the keen appetite and the grateful admiration of a boy; not a dowager brushed past us bedizened with finery, but he fastened the apparition in

my memory, with some piquant remark—as the pin of an entomologist fastens a gaudy fly. No rhumatic old hero-invalid, battered in long wars with the doctors,—no droll marplot of a boy, could appear within range, but I could see in the changeful expression of my companion, the admeasurement and quiet adjustment of the appeal which either made upon his sympathy, or his humor. A flower, a tree, a burst of music, a country market-man hoist upon his wagon of cabbages—all these by turns caught and engaged his attention, however little they might interrupt the flow of his talk.

I ventured to ask on one occasion, if he had depended solely upon his memory for the thousand little descriptions of natural objects which occur in his books.

“Not wholly,” he replied; and went on to tell me it had been his way in the earlier days of his authorship, to carry little tablets with him into the country, and whenever he saw a scene specially picturesque—a cottage of marked features, a noticeable tree, any pic-

ture, in short, which promised service to him,—to note down its distinguishing points, and hold it in reserve.

“This,” said he, “is one among those small arts and industries, which a person who writes much, must avail himself of: they are equivalent to the little thumb sketches from which a painter makes up his larger compositions.”

On our way to the church on a certain Sunday morning, he tapped my shoulder as we entered the little gate, and called my attention to a lithe young Indian girl, who had strolled down from the campment on the plains, and was standing proudly erect upon the church porch, with finger to her lips, scanning curiously the worshippers as they passed in.

“What a splendid figure of a woman!” said he: “she is puzzling over the extravagances and devotions of the white-faces.”

The black, straight elf-locks, the swart face, the great wondering eye, with the gay blanket, short gown of woollen-stuff, and