

# **THE DREAM CHINTZ**

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The Dream Chintz by Henry S. Mackarness

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**HENRY S. MACKARNESS**

**THE  
DREAM CHINTZ**



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DREAM CHINTZ.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"A TRAP TO CATCH A SUNBEAM," "ONLY," "OLD  
JOLLIFER," AND "SEQUEL TO OLD JOLLIFER,"  
"A MERRY CHRISTMAS," ETC.

*Mrs. M. Planck Mackarness.*

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THE

## DREAM CHINTZ.

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A wild woodland glade is brightly illuminated by a stream of light from a moon shining with all the lustre of a summer night, though its rays glisten on the crystal gems which the frost has hung amongst the leafless trees. There is a stillness round; "Earth seems hushed in an angel's lap into a breathless sleep, so still, that we can only say of things, they be."

Suddenly the silence is broken by footsteps trampling on the fallen leaves, which, rendered crisp by the frost, make a low, crunching sound, and tell tales of intruders in that silent glade. Voices murmur softly,

and, parting the branches which have overgrown the path, two beings emerge into the moonlight. One is a tall, gaunt lad of about fifteen, with long legs, which seem so weak and slender that they bend beneath his weight. His fair hair hangs loose upon his shoulders, and in his large blue eyes there is a strange, wild expression; yet so joyous, that his shuffling gait seems at variance with the brightness of his face and the buoyancy of his manner. His companion is some ten years his senior, and, though his countenance beams with intelligence, there is such deep sorrow and care in its every line that it forms a striking contrast to the lad by his side. "Hush!" said the latter, holding up his finger; "talk very gently, or we shall frighten them away. Do you see that ring there on the grass? That's where they dance. Look, Hugh!"

"I see," answered Hugh; "but," he con-

tinued, smiling, "it is very cold for Fairies; I think they will scarcely come out such weather."

"Pshaw!" answered the boy, impatiently. "Fairies do not think about weather; they will come, I tell you," he said, holding up his finger, and speaking in a decided manner; "they come on New Year's eve to tell what they have all been doing during the past year, and receive from their Queen fresh orders for the next. O, they are such good little things, — so industrious, so kind, — and they do help people — so help them out of all their troubles, at least those people who deserve it, such as try to get on themselves, and to help one another, and that are kind to birds, and beasts, and insects; for do you know *they* are sometimes Fairies themselves. I would not tread on a worm, or hurt, indeed, any insect for the world."

"No, poor boy," said his companion, kind-



ly patting him on the shoulder ; " you would not harm any thing, I know."

" Hush !" exclaimed the boy, interrupting him, as the moon, which had been shadowed by a cloud, broke forth again ; " don't speak ; there they are !"

Again the same kind but sceptical smile stole over the young man's face ; but he ceased speaking in obedience to the boy's command. There was a moment's pause ; and then he said, in a low, eager whisper, with his large eyes distended and fixed upon the Fairies' ring, —

" That's the Queen with her bright crown ; and see, how she is giving diadems to all those who have been at work all the long year. Now wait, and you'll see all those go away, and she will call others to her, and tell them what they must do. Some she sends to the sick, some to the poor, some to the wretched ; and then, on New Year's day, if

they have done well and minded all her orders, she lets them stay in Fairy-land always, and gives them jewelled crowns like her own, only not quite so bright. Those outside the ring, with their wings drooping, and no crowns on their heads, are such as have done mischief in the world, instead of good. They are all banished ; she will not have them in her bright land, do you see ? Now stay, Hugh ; in a moment you'll see all those who are going on their different errands fly away. Look ! look ! there they go. Hark ! what a rushing sound their wings make !” And, gazing up into the blue vault of heaven, he pointed to a light, feathery cloud, which was scudding along ; and then, slightly shuddering, he put his arm through his friend's, and said, “ We will go, if you like, now ; it is cold.”

Hugh, who had been standing by his side in silent abstraction for some moments, roused

by the boy's action, answered, "Yes, Walter, my boy, it is indeed cold; we are very silly to stay here at all. Let us go." And again they pushed their way through the branches, which had laced themselves together in an almost impassable barrier across the pathway, and walked on at a quick pace.

"You are not silly," said the boy, as if suddenly recollecting the last speech; "I am silly, — people call me so, at least, — but do you know I think they are much more so, for they often cry and are miserable, and some of them quarrel and fight, and spend all their money, so that they starve; but I don't. I'm never miserable; I never cry, or quarrel, or fight, and keep all my money in a money-box," he added in a whisper; and then, bursting into a bright, musical laugh, said, "That's wise, isn't it? — not silly."

"True, dear Walter, true; would that you could instil such wisdom into those who,