

# **A STORY OF PSYCHE**

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**GERALD GRIFFIN**

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BY GERALD GRIFFIN,

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## A STORY OF PSYCHE.

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AFTER the gate of Eden was closed upon the exiled parents of mankind, the maiden Psyche,\* still drooping with penitence for her fault, still bathed in tears of filial sorrow, and pining for some means of effecting a reconciliation with her offended benefactor, passed into a valley of the east, inferior indeed in loveliness to the Paradise which she had forfeited, but still lovely and blooming beyond all that our cold imagination can conceive of that Paradise itself.

The sorrowing maiden was astonished at the change which she felt in her nature. Passions, which, during her days of innocence and favour, remained almost concealed from her own know-

\* The Soul.



ledge within her bosom, or only awoke in gentle impulses to give a zest and force to her enjoyments, now startled her by the strange and unruly violence with which they rebelled against her government. It seemed as if they participated in that spirit which estranged from her dominion the creatures of the air and forest, from the moment she lost the favour of her Maker. The creation around, which in her earlier years had presented only objects calculated to afford her innocent delight, now wore an altered look. Sin and temptation seemed to mingle with all its beauties; and she trembled as she ventured on the paths of the yet untrodden valley, with a strange feeling of care and insecurity.

The Almighty, by whom she was led into that delightful region, informed her that nothing of all she now beheld could afford a lasting happiness to her spirit. From him she had proceeded, as the stream from the mountain top, and like that stream she could never know repose until she had reached the level of her origin, the bosom of that kind being from whom she derived her life. In order to prevent her fixing her affections on any of those beautiful objects which she beheld around her, and so forgetting her real



destiny, the Almighty had made all things changeable within her view. Spring faded into summer; summer into autumn; autumn into winter; day into night. The flowers, as soon as she plucked and pressed them to her bosom, faded and died; nothing was permanent, nothing fixed or lasting; the waters flowed, the winds passed on, the stars rose and set; all things seemed created for her enjoyment, and yet none were half so long-lived as the affections of the maiden. The Almighty, who knew the secret principle of her nature, which tended, with an invisible longing, towards himself, beheld and pitied the efforts which she made to find a substitute in her exile, on which the desires of her heart might dwell with satisfaction.

He told her that there was one way, and only one, by which she might attain the perfect happiness for which she pined, and pointed to a mount on which the beams of the evening sun fell, far in the distance. There, he said, she would learn the course of which he spoke.

To aid her in her journey thither many councillors and friends were given her; for Psyche, in her earthly condition, was a feeble creature, incapable of forming any design, and only pos-

sessing a free will to choose between the good and evil proposals which were made by her own ministers.

The duties of her attendants were various. The five Senses were appointed to give her intelligence of all that passed in the creation around her. Taste warned her against the use of those fruits which might be pernicious to her health, and directed her to the choice of others, from which she received a delicate gratification, and an unfailling store of strength and vigour. Smell conducted her to those pleasant vales which were filled with the purest airs, and most ambrosial fragrance; and cautioned her to avoid the unwholesome vapours that were engendered in the marshes and on the shores of the standing lake. Hearing supplied her with intelligence of all the sounds that creation sent forth, from the light whisper of the wind that shook her bower and disturbed her morning slumbers, to the awful pealing of the thunder-cloud, which was heard from the one heaven to the other; and which Psyche attended with a deep reverence, and since her banishment with fear. To Sight was assigned the duty of presenting, for the admiration and instruction of the maiden, all the beau-

tiful shapes and hues which were comprised in the young creation; while Feeling remained close to the side of his mistress, and though more limited in the extent of his occupations than the two last mentioned, yet, by the accuracy and fidelity of his intelligence, not only added to her information, but was frequently employed in correcting the errors and misrepresentations of those Senses.

The ideas, however, which they communicated to her were as fugitive and short-lived as they were lively and exciting. To enable her to retain them for the uses of her journey through the world, the matron, Memory, was directed to attend her steps, and to treasure up all the intelligence which Psyche desired should not be lost. Memory was, however, not very judicious in her choice, and wholly incapable of applying the hoarded information which she possessed, to any advantage. She was, moreover, compliant and parasitical in her disposition; and in making her selections from the quantities of information communicated to her by the Senses, she was always careful to observe and to be guided by the mood of Psyche at the moment. The consequence was, that her storehouse was often