



The Star and the Flower.

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Illustrated by M. W. Feaver.

For the Children.

THERE was once a little golden star in the heavens. When the night was very young, and the pale young moon was sinking, and softly parting the dusky curtains of the twilight, the little star came forth and quivered in the blue.

It came all alone into the evening sky, after the sunset. Its rays were not far-reaching, nor its light brilliant, but very clear and pure, and God only permitted it to shine a short while, before the great brilliant stars and glittering constellations flashed forth to dim its radiance.

But it had the exquisite happiness of shining down upon a beautiful garden with bowers and lawn, and flowers—flowers everywhere. After the fall of the first dew, a thousand sweet odours floated up, like grateful incense on the cool evening air.

At first the star had cared only to linger, while the faint, roseate after-glow of the sunset yet flashed the western heaven, and when the night with trailing robes and shadowy pinions swept slowly across the darkening sky, the little trembling star was glad to leave the watches of the night to those glorious orbs whose brilliancy and beauty so far exceeded its own.

But once, as it shone on a summer eve, among the odours floating upward was one

sweeter, more tender, more divine, than had ever risen before. It came from a beautiful pure white blossom with half-opened petals and a heart of gold. The star looked down and loved the flower passionately. For the moment it beamed brighter, clearer, and its rays shone into the heart of the flower. The flower looked up, trembling on its slender stem, and loved also.

There were children in the garden, and every evening they watched for the coming of the star. They called it their star, and loved it best because it came the first of all the starry hosts that flashed and burned all night upon the wide fields of heaven, but which they might not see, save in dreams. To-night, as they saw it, one said: "How bright our star shines to-night!" and another: "How it twinkles!" They did not know what the star knew, that it was love that lent it added lustre, that it was trembling with love for the radiant flower.

Now the little star was loth to leave the night skies, and it shone so bright and clear that it lingered later, shining down upon the flower. All day it thought of the beautiful flower, and sighed to think that the hot sun might scorch the tender petals, or the cold rains beat upon it, or the boisterous breezes visit it too roughly. The star longed to be a butterfly, to hover a moment on its snowy