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## **The Pilgrims of the Rhine**

**Lytton, Edward Bulwer Lytton**

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Chapter XIV.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE FAIRY'S CAVE, AND THE FAIRY'S WISH.

It was evening; and the fairies were dancing beneath the twilight star.

“And why art thou sad, my violet,” said the Prince, “for thine eyes seek the ground?”

“Now that I have found thee,” answered the Queen, “and now that I feel what happy love is to a fairy, I sigh over that love which I have lately witnessed among mortals, but the bud of whose happiness already conceals the worm. For well didst thou say, my Prince, that we are linked with a mysterious affinity to mankind, and whatever is pure and gentle amongst them, speaks at once to our sympathy, and commands our vigils.”

“And most of all,” said the German Fairy, “are they who love under our watch; for love is the golden chain that binds all in the universe; love lights up alike the star and the glow-worm; and wherever there is love in men’s lot, lies the secret affinity with men, and with things divine.”

“But with the human race,” said Nymphalin, “there

is no love that outlasts the hour, for either death ends, or custom alters; when the blossom comes to fruit, it is plucked, and seen no more; and therefore, when I behold true love sentenced to an early grave, I comfort myself that I shall not at least behold the beauty dimmed, and the softness of the heart hardened into stone. Yet, my Prince, while still the pulse can beat, and the warm blood flow, in that beautiful form, which I have watched over of late, let me not desert her; still let my influence keep the sky fair, and the breezes pure; still let me drive the vapour from the moon, and the clouds from the faces of the stars; still let me fill her dreams with tender and brilliant images, and glass in the mirror of sleep, the happiest visions of fairy land; still let me pour over her eyes that magic, which suffers them to see no fault in one in whom she has garnered up her soul! And as death comes slowly on, still let me rob the spectre of its terror, and the grave of its sting;—so that, all gently and unconscious to herself, life may glide into the Great Ocean where the shadows lie; and the spirit, without guile, may be severed from its mansion without pain!”

The wish of the Fairy was fulfilled.

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