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THE POET'S BANQUET

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

As in wine and music the midnight goes,
And the wind sings low to the sleeping rose,
A star comes out in the clouds above,
And smiles like a sleepless spirit of love.

Alone in the heaven and strangely light
It stands in the boundless gloom of night,
Though the clouds rush by in a shadowy train,
And the pine trees shrink from the wind and rain.

The music faints in the crowded heart,
And the lamps burn low and the guests depart,
And the flowers that watched with a drooping grace,
All faded, fall from each fragrant vase.

The poet stands in the glimmering light,
And gazes afar through the gloomy night
With a flushing cheek and a fiery eye,
As the train of tempests goes rushing by.

The storm-bell tolls from the distant cloud,
And the winds go past in a wailing crowd;
But no flashing fires on the sky are viewed—
The star is alone in the solitude.

The poet gazes again and again
On the star that stands in the gloom and rain;
Then turns to the banquet's lonely scene
With a weary step and a troubled mien.

He raises the chalice of crimson wine,
And murmurs above its Circean shine:
"My star! the truest and brightest star!"
And flings the cup he has drained afar.

The tempests hush and the clouds all part,
And a silence falls in the poet's heart,
While an angel floats from her smiling mates,
And bears him away to the star that waits.