

A Poem of
Letitia Elizabeth Landon
(L. E. L.)
in
Forget Me Not, 1839

compiled
by
Peter J. Bolton

Alice Lee



ALICE LEE

Painted by F. Nash Engraved by L. Stocks

A L I C E L E E.

Through the dim and lonely forest
Comes a low sweet sound,
Like the whispering of angels
To the greenwood round,
Bearing through the hours of midnight,
On their viewless wings,
Music in its measure telling
High and holy things.

Through the forest lone and dim
Swelleth soft the twilight hymn
Of the old knight's lovely daughter,
The gentle Alice Lee.

On the grass the dews unbroken
In their silver lie,
And the stars are out in thousands
On the deep blue sky ;
Bright as when the old Chaldeans
Held them as the shrine
Where was kept the varying fortune
Of our human line.

Would that o'er their mystic scroll
Better hours may have to roll
For the old knight's lovely daughter,
The gentle Alice Lee !

Time was, coming forth together,
She and Spring might seem
Like the beautiful creations
Of a morning dream ;
Each went through the quiet greenwood
Wandering alone,
With the green leaves and wild flowers
O'er their pathway strown.
Of the seasons in the year
Spring seemed fittest to be near
The old knight's lovely daughter,
The gentle Alice Lee.

Round her head the locks are golden,
So the sun in June
Pours his glory o'er the summer
At his crystal noon ;
From that shining hair, when parted,
Came the pure high brow,
With the carving of a statue,
With the mountain's snow.
Blue her eyes as yon blue heaven,
Nature every charm had given
To the old knight's lovely daughter,
The gentle Alice Lee.

But it was the inward beauty
Breathing from her face,
That gave every look and motion
Its diviner grace ;

Thought was on the high white forehead,
In the deep blue eyes,
And it was the quick warm feeling
Bade the blushes rise,
Which could such sweet light impart,
Writing on the cheek, the heart,
Of the old knight's lovely daughter,
The gentle Alice Lee.

Lovely was the highborn maiden,
Happy were the hours
Gathering in the oak-tree's shelter
Mosses and wild flowers ;
When the deer from each green coppice
Fled, a startled band,
Save when some familiar favourite
Fed from her small hand.
Danger now, and fear, and wrath,
Are around the woodland path
Of the old knight's lovely daughter,
The gentle Alice Lee.

Nobly doth she meet the trial,
She who hath but known
Till the present time of trouble
Life's smooth path alone.
Though her smile be somewhat sadder,
And her eye subdued,
Such are lovelier as the token
Of a higher mood.

Like an angel's is the face,
In its meek and pensive grace,
Of the old knight's lovely daughter,
The gentle Alice Lee.

Not an hour of calm and quiet
Hath his old age found,
There are foes and strangers haunting
His ancestral ground.
Of his ancient halls and woodlands
Is the old man reft,
But they have not quite bereaved him,
For his child is left.

Others evil fortunes move,
Deeper, dearer, is the love
Of the old knight's lovely daughter,
The gentle Alice Lee.

'Tis her voice that now is raising
Words of praise and prayer,
Heaven will consecrate the worship
Of this hour of care.

Earthly care and earthly sorrow
Only purify ;

Such a heart as that uplifting
Its best hopes on high.

Heaven will bless the faithful maid,
Heaven will bless the duty paid
By the old knight's lovely daughter,
The gentle Alice Lee.

L. E. L.