



THE FAIRIES

William Allingham

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting,
For fear of little men.
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather!

Down along the rocky shore
 Some make their home.
They live on crispy pancakes
 Of yellow tide-foam;
Some in the reeds
 Of the black mountain-lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs,
 All night awake.

High on the hilltop
 The old King sits;
He is now so old and gray,
 He's nigh lost his wits.
With a bridge of white mist
 Columkill he crosses,
On his stately journeys
 From Slieveleague to Rosses;
Or going up with music
 On cold starry nights,
To sup with the Queen
 Of the gay Northern Lights.

They stole little Bridget
 For seven years long;
When she came down again,
 Her friends were all gone.

They took her lightly back,
 Between the night and morrow;
They thought that she was fast asleep,
 But she was dead with sorrow.
They have kept her ever since
 Deep within the lake,
On a bed of flag-leaves,
 Watching till she wake.

By the craggy hillside,
 Through the mosses bare,
They have planted thorn trees
 For pleasure here and there.
Is any man so daring
 As dig them up in spite,
He shall find their sharpest thorns
 In his bed at night.

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