

With trembling heart White Aster pushed the gate
And entered — but what sight! an old man stood
Deep sunk in thought against an upright beam,
As counting the slow hours, impatiently,
Until that hoped-for children should come back.
Now he looks up! “Oh Father!” Oh what joy
Breathes in that moment of a child’s return!

The sun retired to rest, the darkness fell,
And moon and stars kindled their nightly lamps.
The three sat joyful at the festive board;
For the old man welcomed with joy the son,
Whom once he drove to exile, praising much
His patience in misfortune; but his words
Came fastest when he praised the modesty
And virtue of the maid. Then with a smile,
Uplifting high his brimming glass, he blessed
The hour that brought his children back to him,
After long painful absence; and enquired
Of their adventures, and himself began
To tell his own:

“When on that morn I left
My home, and to the mountains bent my steps,
Making a slip, I lost my firm foothold,
And fell into a deep ravine. In vain,
I tried a hundred dangerous roads

