

1832

THE SONG OF THE STARS

William Cullen Bryant

Bryant, William Cullen (1794-1878) - American poet and editor of the New York Evening Post who practiced law before devoting his life to writing. A master of blank verse, Bryant's earliest works are considered his best. The Song of the Stars (1832) - Opening lines: When the radiant morn of creation broke, / And the world in the smile of God awoke,...

THE SONG OF THE STARS

When the radiant morn of creation broke,
 And the world in the smile of God awoke,
 And the empty realms of darkness and death
 Were moved through their depths by his mighty breath,
 And orbs of beauty and spheres of flame
 From the void abyss by myriads came
 In the joy of youth as they darted away,
 Through the widening wastes of space to play,
 Their silver voices in chorus rang,
 And this was the song the bright ones sang:

“Away, away, through the wide, wide sky,
 The fair blue fields that before us lie
 Each sun with the worlds that round him roll,
 Each planet, poised on her turning pole;
 With her isles of green, and her clouds of white,
 And her waters that lie like fluid light.

“For the source of glory uncovers his face,

And the brightness o'erflows unbounded space,
 And we drink as we go to the luminous tides
 In our ruddy air and our blooming sides:
 Lo, yonder the living splendors play;
 Away, on our joyous path, away!

“Look, look, through our glittering ranks afar,
 In the infinite azure, star after star,
 How they brighten and bloom as they swiftly pass!
 How the verdure runs o'er each rolling mass!
 And the path of the gentle winds is seen,
 Where the small waves dance,
 and the young woods lean.

“And see, where the brighter day-beams pour,
 How the rainbows hang in the sunny shower;
 And the morn and eve, with their pomp of hues,
 Shift o'er the bright planets and shed their dews;
 And 'twixt them both, o'er the teeming ground,
 With her shadowy cone the night goes round!

“Away, away! in our blossoming bowers,
In the soft airs wrapping these spheres of ours,
In the seas and fountains that shine with morn,
See, Love is brooding, and Life is born,
And breathing myriads are breaking from night,
To rejoice, like us, in motion and light.

“Glide on in your beauty, ye youthful spheres,
To weave the dance that measures the years;
Glide on, in the glory and gladness sent
To the furthest wall of the firmament
The boundless visible smile of Him
To the veil of whose brow your lamps are dim.”

THE END