

From *The Troubador* (1825)
By Letitia Elizabeth Landon

THE ENCHANTED ISLAND
BY DANBY

AND there the island lay, the waves around
Had never known a storm; for the north wind
Was charm'd from coming, and the only airs
That blew brought sunshine on their azure wings,
5 Or tones of music from the sparry caves,
Where the sea-maids make lutes of the pink conch.
These were sea breezes,--those that swept the land
Brought other gifts,--sighs from blue violets,
Or from June's sweet Sultana, the bright rose,
10 Stole odours. On the silver mirror's face
Was but a single ripple that was made
By a flamingo's beak, whose scarlet wings
Shone like a meteor on the stream: around,
Upon the golden sands, were coral plants,
15 And shells of many colours, and sea weeds,
Whose foliage caught and chain'd the Nautilus,
Where lay they as at anchor. On each side
Were grottoes, like fair porticoes with steps
Of the green marble; and a lovely light,
20 Like the far radiance of a thousand lamps,
Half-shine, half-shadow, or the glorious track
Of a departing star but faintly seen
In the dim distance, through those caverns shone,
And play'd o'er the tall trees which seem'd to hide
25 Gardens, where hyacinths rang their soft bells
To call the bees from the anemone,
Jealous of their bright rivals' golden wealth.
--Amid those arches floated starry shapes,
Just indistinct enough to make the eye
30 Dream of surpassing beauty; but in front,
Borne on a car of pearl, and drawn by swans,
There lay a lovely figure,--she was queen
Of the Enchanted Island, which was raised
From ocean's bosom but to pleasure her:
35 And spirits, from the stars, and from the sea,
The beautiful mortal had them for her slaves.
She was the daughter of a king, and lvoed
By a young Ocean Spirit from her birth,--
He hover'd o'er her in her infancy,
40 And bade the rose grow near her, that her cheek
Might catch its colour,--lighted up her dreams
With fairy wonders, and made harmony
The element in which she moved; at last,
When that she turn'd away from earthly love,
45 Enamour'd of her visions, he became
Visible with his radiant wings, and bore
His bride to the fair island.