

**STORY OF THE GLITTERING PLAIN
WHICH HAS BEEN ALSO CALLED
THE LAND OF LIVING MEN OR
THE ACRE OF THE UNDYING
WRITTEN**

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Story of the Glittering Plain Which Has Been Also Called the Land of Living Men or the Acre of the Undying Written by William Morris

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WILLIAM MORRIS

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OR THE LAND OF LIVING MEN.

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ING PLAIN WHICH HAS BEEN
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THE
STORY OF THE GLITTERING PLAIN;
OR,
THE LAND OF LIVING MEN.

CHAPTER I.

OF THOSE THREE WHO CAME TO THE HOUSE
OF THE RAVEN.

IT has been told that there was once a young man of free kindred and whose name was Hallblithe: he was fair, strong, and not untried in battle; he was of the House of the Raven of old time.

This man loved an exceeding fair damsel called the Hostage, who was of the House of the Rose, wherein it was right and due that the men of the Raven should wed.

She loved him no less, and no man of the kindred gainsaid their love, and they were to be wedded on Midsummer Night.

But one day of early spring, when the days were yet short and the nights long, Hallblithe

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sat before the porch of the house smoothing an ash stave for his spear, and he heard the sound of horse-hoofs drawing nigh, and he looked up and saw folk riding toward the house, and so presently they rode through the garth gate; and there was no man but he about the house, so he rose up and went to meet them, and he saw that they were but three in company: they had weapons with them, and their horses were of the best; but they were no fellowship for a man to be afraid of; for two of them were old and feeble, and the third was dark and sad, and drooping of aspect: it seemed as if they had ridden far and fast, for their spurs were bloody and their horses all a-sweat.

Hallblithe hailed them kindly and said: "Ye are wayworn, and maybe ye have to ride further; so light down and come into the house, and take bite and sup, and hay and corn also for your horses; and then if ye needs must ride on your way, depart when ye are rested; or else if ye may, then abide here night-long, and go your ways to-morrow, and meantime that which is ours shall be yours, and all shall be free to you."

Then spake the oldest of the elders in a high piping voice and said: "Young man, we thank thee; but though the days of the springtide are

waxing, the hours of our lives are waning; nor may we bide unless thou canst truly tell us that this is the Land of the Glittering Plain; and if that be so, then delay not, lead us to thy lord, and perhaps he will make us content."

Spake he who was somewhat less stricken in years than the first: "Thanks have thou! but we need something more than meat and drink, to wit the Land of Living Men. And Oh! but the time presses."

Spake the sad and sorry carle: "We seek the Land where the days are many: so many that he who hath forgotten how to laugh, may learn the craft again, and forget the days of Sorrow."

Then they all three cried aloud and said:

"Is this the Land? Is this the Land?"

But Hallblithe wondered, and he laughed and said: "Wayfarers, look under the sun down the plain which lieth betwixt the mountains and the sea, and ye shall behold the meadows all gleaming with the spring lilies; yet do we not call this the Glittering Plain, but Cleveland by the Sea. Here men die when their hour comes, nor know I if the days of their life be long enough for the forgetting of sorrow; for I am young and not yet a yoke-fellow of sorrow; but this I know, that they are long enough for the doing of deeds that shall not die. And as for