

***WILLIAM
MORRIS***



***THE HOLLOW
LAND***

William Morris

The Hollow Land

EAN 8596547374787

DigiCat, 2022

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"We find in ancient story wonders many told,
Of heroes in great glory, with spirit free and bold;
Of joyances and high-tides, of weeping and of woe,
Of noble reckon striving, mote ye now wonders know."

Niebelungen Lied (see Carlyle's Miscellanies)

STRUGGLING IN THE WORLD.

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Do you know where it is -- the Hollow Land?

I have been looking for it now so long, trying to find it
again the Hollow Land for there I saw my love first.

I wish to tell you how I found it first of all; but I am old,
my memory fails me: you must wait and let me think if I
perchance can tell you how it happened. Yea, in my ears is a
confused noise of trumpet-blasts singing over desolate

moors, in my ears and eyes a clashing and clanging of horse-hoofs, a ringing and glittering of steel; drawn-back lips, set teeth, shouts, shrieks, and curses.

How was it that no one of us ever found it till that day? for it is near our country: but what time have we to look for it, or any good thing; with such biting carking cares hemming us in on every side-cares about great things-mighty things: mighty things, O my brothers! or rather little things enough, if we only knew it. Lives passed in turmoil, in making one another unhappy; in bitterest misunderstanding of our brothers' hearts, making those sad whom God has not made sad, alas, alas! What chance for any of us to find the Hollow Land? What time even to look for it?

Yet who has not dreamed of it? Who, half miserable yet the while, for that he knows it is but a dream, has not felt the cool waves round his feet, the roses crowning him, and through the leaves of beech and lime the many whispering winds of the Hollow Land?

Now, my name was Florian, and my house was the house of the Lilies; and of that house was my father lord, and after him my eldest brother Amald; and me they called Florian de Liliis.

Moreover, when my father was dead, there arose a feud between the Lilies' house and Red Harald; and this that follows is the history of it.

Lady Swanhilda, Red Harald's mother, was a widow, with one son. Red Harald; and when she had been in widowhood two years, being of princely blood, and besides comely and fierce. King Urrayne sent to demand her in marriage. And I remember seeing the procession leaving the town, when I