

You seem ungrateful. But wait. The Prince comes. He will enlighten thine ignorance.'

There was a rushing sound as of wings, a dazzling light that illuminated every corner and cranny of the cave. Mallow saw before him a being clad from head to heel in black armor, great black wings on his shoulders that touched the ground as he stood. His visor turned back displayed a pale girlish face framed by glossy raven curls. Soft black eyes—that Harvey found out later on could sparkle with anger like living coals, looked out from exquisitely pencilled eyebrows, and curled lashes, features like chiselled marble completed the picture.

"I am Alcor, Prince of the star of refuge. Foilworn, my slave has rescued you from the worm. I shelter you in my domain until the End of all comes. But on one condition only. You must never love, as mortals love. Listen! At night the falling stars wend their downward way, and cleave the sky to nothingness. They are the souls, who dared to love in Alcor. I, the Prince, cast them out. Such your fate if you break the law."

Perpetual day weighed in the aerial kingdom of Alcor. These, floral growth far surpassed that of the planet called the world. There, ever verdant hills and valleys resounded with the songs of myriad birds of tropical plumage. There, silvery streamlets rippled over beds of snowy pebbles, jewel studded. Exquisitely beautiful was the land where Harvey Mallow—awakening, as from a dream—found himself. People of every age of the World inhabited this, star kingdom. There, the stately citizen of Athens of old walked and talked with a son of Egypt, and a world-forgotten mandarin from the celestial empire; each wearing the national dress in vogue at the time of their exit from the World. There the much-tried Israelite, and the wily Hittite disputed their old feuds once more in friendly converse. The Greek maid lounged side by side with a modern beauty, comparing the merits of their respective centuries, enjoying the *dolce far niente* of the balmy kingdom.

The inhabitants of Alcor were all happy. Occasionally one or two individuals would disappear. Then it would be whispered that the law had been broken. Some one had dared to love as mortals love.

In Drusilla a beautiful Roman maiden, Harvey Mallow found a friend and guide. As they wandered hand in hand through the exquisite valleys of the star country, he listened to her world-story, the maiden to his.

"I lived, good Sir, in the time of Trajan. My father was a captain of the Emperor's Guard, and wore the Eagle on his breast-plate. How my father loved me—his only child—the gods only knew; and Tullus a young soldier whom the Emperor trusted, and sent away on a ten years' campaign, loved me also. He, parting from me, vowed fidelity upon his sword. I was his promised wife. Alas Sir! Ten years is a long weary time in the world. A maid is but a maid after all, and my father had a slave—a dusky captive that girded him for warfare, and bore his cup at feasts. Such speaking eyes he had! A figure like a god! I forgot Tullus—I forgot my honor—my father discovered! He was a true Roman, he could not brook disgrace. But O! The punishment that he devised for me—his erring daughter! Brick on brick they placed before the niche where I stood trembling, condemned to living death, my lover a loathsome corpse at my feet, slain by my father's hand. The very gods wept. Their tears in rain-drops splashed my face—then all was darkness."

"As in my case," said Harvey, "that Foilworm went to your rescue. Tell me did you ever long to go back to the world?"

"Ah yes. It may be that you do not know. We may go back once again. When the number of the century corresponds with your age at the time Foilworm rescued you, the Prince permits you to return, and visit the world."

"To remain there?"

"You will not wish to, you will long to return to Alcor."

"Did you go Drusilla?"

"In the middle of this present century I foolishly left this happy kingdom, and visited the world.'