

EPILOGUE

IN HOLLOW STONES, SCAWFELL

BLIND the iron pinnacles edge the twilight ;
Blind and black the ghylls of the mountain
 clefted,
Crag and snow-clad slope in a distant vision
 Rise as before me.

Here (it seems) my feet by a tiny torrent
Press the moss with a glad delight of being :
Here my eyes look up to the riven mountain
 Split by the thunder.

Rent and rifted, shattered of wind and lightning,
Smitten, Scarred, and stricken of sun and
 tempest,

Seamed with wounds, like adamant, shod with
iron,
Torn by the earthquake.

Still through all the stresses of doubtful weather
Hold the firm old pinnacles, sky-defying ;
Still the icy feet of the wind relentless
Walk in their meadows.

Fields that flower not, blossom in no new spring-
tide ;
Fields where grass nor herb nor abounding darnel
Flourish ; fields more barren, devoid, than ocean's
Pasture ungarnered.

Deserts, stone as arid as sand, savannahs
Black with wrecks, a wilderness evil, fruitless ;
Still, to me, a land of the bluest heaven
Studded with silver.

Castles bleak and bare as the wrath of ocean,
Wasted wall and tower, as the blast had risen,
Taken keep and donjon, and hurled them earth-
ward,
Rent and uprooted.

Such rock-ruins people me tribes and nations,
Kings and queens and princes as pure as
 dawning,
Brave as day and true ; and a happy people
 Lulled unto freedom ;

Nations past the stormier times of tyrants,
Past the sudden spark of a great rebellion,
Past the iron gates that are thrust asunder
 Not without bloodshed :

Past the rule of might and the rule of lying,
Free from gold's bad sceptre, and free to
 cherish
Joys of life diviner than war and passion—
 Falsest of phantoms.

Only now true love, like a sun of molten
Glory, surging up from a sea of liquid
Silver, golden, exquisite, overflowing,
 Soars into starland.

Only now the rivalry equal, eager,
Friendly, spurs the young to a mimic battle,
Spurs the old to honour, and fame, and fortune,
 Ready to harvest.

Sphere on sphere unite in the chant of wonder ;
Star to star must add to the glowing chorus ;
Sun and moon must mingle and speed the
 echo
 Flaming through heaven.

Night and day divide, and the music strengthens,
Gathers roar of seas and the dirge of moor-
 lands ;
Tempest, thunder, birds, and the breeze of
 summer
 Join to augment it.

So the sound-world, filled of the fire of all
 things,
Rolls majestic torrents of mighty music
Through the stars where dwell the avenging
 spirits
 Bound in the whirlwind . . .

So the cliffs their Song . . . For the mist re-
 gathers,
Girds them bride-like, fit for the sun to kiss
 them ;
Darkness falls like dewfall about the hillsides ;
 Night is upon me.

Now to me remain in the doubtful twilight
Stretches bare of flower, but touched with
 whispers,
Grey with huddled rocks, and a space of wood-
 land,
 Pine-tree and poplar.

Now a stream to ford and a stile to clamber ;
Last the inn, a book, and a quiet corner . . .
Fresh as Spring, there kisses me on the forehead
 Sleep, like a sister.