

For the destiny drives us together, like deer in a pass of the
hills,
Above is the sky, and around us the sound and the shot that
kills;
Pushed by a power we see not, and struck by a hand unknown,
We pray to the trees for shelter and press our lips to a stone.

The trees wave a shadowy answer, and the rock frowns hollow
and grim,
And the form and nod of the demon are caught in the twilight
dim;
And we look to the sunlight falling afar on the mountain crest,
Is there never a path runs upward to a refuge there and a rest?

The path, ah! who has shown it, and which is the faithful
guide?
The haven, ah! who has known it? for steep is the mountain
side,
For ever the shot strikes surely, and ever the wasted breath
Of the praying multitude rises whose answer is only death.

Here are the tombs of my kinsfolk, the first of an ancient
name,
Chiefs who were slain on the warfield, and women who died in
flame;
They are gods, these kings of the foretime, they are spirits who
guard our race—
Ever I watch and worship; they sit with a marble face.

And the myriad idols around me, and the legion of muttering
priests,
The revels and rites unholy, the sacrilegious feasts!
What have they wrung from the silence? Hath even a whisper
come
Of the secret—Whence and Whither? Alas! for the gods are
dumb.