

A Song of Stone

The Wanderer:

Listen! And I will sing a song of stone,
A song that came in the midst of wandering:
The day was young, and glistening
With the star of dawn above me,
And that morning, as I walked, I heard a voice...
The coarsest whisper in the morning's silence,
It could have been a crow's croak upon the downs,
But it came to me, as in a dream.
And I, in the fullness of curiosity,
Turning upon the way, looked and saw
Before me on the path: a holey stone.

Gazing at each other eye to eye,
There passed between us, a silent understanding,
And much to my great wonderment,
The humble stone began to tell it's bygone story,

The Stone:

O it was so long ago - I remember it still,
That I rolled from some ancient river's edge,
Into a living sea of dreams,
And there, through vast eons of time
I lay, wrapped in the steady swirl of ages,
Shaped by the flow of water's passing.

The Wanderer:

Immediately I was in the spirit:
Trembling, and reaching out my hand,
I gathered up that pebble bright, and listened:

The Stone:

With the history of the universe inscribed within me
There formed a deep secret...
A dimple, hollow, chamber, cavern
Portal, gateway, tunnel, passage...
As the elements have curved, cupped and cleft the earth,
So too have I been marked by time's passing
By rising and setting suns,
By waxing and waning moons,
By the ebb and flowing tide of waters,
O how I have endured the work of time's
harsh sorrows.

The Wanderer:

Nestled in my palm

I was compelled to heed the humble gem,

And as if by some unseen force,

I felt it charm me.

Lying there a long while,

The eye of my heart, drawn to the window offered by that holey stone,

A vision was revealed,

And I gazed in full wonder:

I looked, and saw from the four quarters of this land,

Great stones, rising from the loam,

Born out of the dark earth, and in deep obedience to her,

I looked, and saw those rocks,

Marching in solemn procession,

over their maternal ground.

I felt a tremble in my bones as I watched

Those grim, but noble beings,

Moving like giants -

Advancing down their timeworn trackways,

From the mountains to the plains.

And behold, as if in thrall to some grim and meditative ritual,

I saw how with a ponderous and sober dignity,

Greater than that of kings,

They arranged themselves,

In vast formations:

Brooding sarsens rose up,

And with great ceremony,

Resolved themselves in portentous designs,

And I, witness to this ancient mystery saw:

Those pendulous stones,

Hung by their own art,

Composing their dark enigma on the plains,

Marking out a secret known only to stars,

A solemn courtship of the winter light,

A reverent worship of the summer's end,

A silent vesper to some in-dwelling self,

Resounding to the whirlwind's sweep:

A bleak and ominous henge...

The Stone:

As though dropping down from eaves,
Or stealing through a keyhole
With great startlement and awe
Have you watched, and listened,
And I, your little wheel of stone,
Have whispered a song,
And thronged a vision,
Enough to petrify even the stoutest of hearts,
And yet:

I know your fragile, human wishes,
And I hear your earnest dreams,
And so I offer this:

Whenever you have need of solace,
Whenever you have need of protection,
Whenever your heart has need of courage,
You may find and keep me about your being,
But ever mindful:

That there is never any coming to consciousness without pain,
That the imagination, never governed,
Is always the ruling and divine power;
And whether or not they are bidden:
The gods are always present.