**Lines 1073-1100**

*"So careful of the type?" but no.
   From scarped cliff and quarried stone
   She cries, "A thousand types are gone:
I care for nothing, all shall go.*

*"Thou makest thine appeal to me:
   I bring to life, I bring to death:
   The spirit does but mean the breath:
I know no more." And he, shall he,*

*Man, her last work, who seem'd so fair,
   Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
   Who roll'd the psalm to wintry skies,
Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,*

*Who trusted God was love indeed
  And love Creation's final law—
  Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw
With ravine, shriek'd against his creed—*

*Who loved, who suffer'd countless ills,
  Who battled for the True, the Just,
  Be blown about the desert dust,
Or seal'd within the iron hills?*

*No more? A monster then, a dream,
   A discord. Dragons of the prime,
   That tare each other in their slime,
Were mellow music match'd with him.*

*O life as futile, then, as frail!
   O for thy voice to soothe and bless!
   What hope of answer, or redress?
Behind the veil, behind the veil.*

* Bingo—the cosmic struggle we noticed in the previous canto seems to be very much on the agenda here.
* Before, the speaker thought Nature was protective of whole species, but here he changes his mind and thinks, "Silly me! She doesn't even care about that!"
* He gets his evidence from "scarped cliff and quarried stone." (If you're thinking this sound an awful lot like an archeological dig, you're right. Remember: Darwin's Theory of Evolution and other scientific discoveries are on people's radar during the Victorian period like nobody's biz.)
* The "scarped cliff" (which means a fracture in the earth's crust, or escarpment) and "quarried stone" are places where fossils are found.
* Studying this evidence showed scientists back then that many, many "types" (species) have been lost over time.
* So, if that's the case, Nature doesn't really give a fig for the species.
* And that's a terrifying thought, one that emphasizes the idea of Nature being an antagonistic force against puny human beings—which Tennyson has returned to several times in the poem.
* The speaker notes that humankind is Nature's last work (and the greatest, it's suggested).
* Man (meaning all of humanity) seemed to have a purpose, and built churches (a "fane" is an archaic word for a church), sang psalms (songs of religious praise), and trusted in the divine love of God. But all of this is in vain.
* Another Famous Line Alert: all of this is because Nature is "red in tooth and claw" and "shrieks" against this divine love. Violent [image](http://www.shmoop.com/literature-glossary/imagery.html)? You betcha.
* Is the fate of humans then to be true and just and suffer, and then to just turn to dust and be fossils themselves ("seal'd within the iron hills")? Is there nothing more for mankind?
* Notice how the speaker seems to get more frantic over these two stanzas. He's speaking in short, choppy phrases, with lots of internal stops within lines and tons of question marks.
* His uncertainty and despair culminates in the penultimate stanza. He sees monsters tearing each other apart in the slime. (Another archaic word: "tare" is the past tense of "tear.")
* In the final stanza, he's really in despair mode, calling out to the spirit of Arthur to make him feel better, and acknowledging that any hope for making sense out of all of this only exists in the afterlife ("after the veil").