

Wilderness House Literary Review 12/4

Joe MacLean

Ivory Monument

Bronze elephants remember the spot
where poached ivory was burned.
We root in the gravity, muted
by the avarice and devilry.

Two towering giraffes
sway silently from the bush
and pause, as if they wish to speak.

Black Hills

A mountain is Sioux War Chief
galloping across a mica sky
in his naming of vision.

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Back to the Cavern

Five billion humans will awake connected
in a branching cavern system networking
mountains of message and image within
persistent bits of worth or wickedness.

What totem will weave their stares into vision?
What intention will captivate their allegiance?
What virtue, lie, or turpitude will guide them
as they explore the paths of flesh and bone?

Founders brought family fires into the cave
and painted the essence of life on the rock
with pigment of future and blood of past,
fixing narrative of survival and kinship.

Distant flames will quiver the wall shadows.
Can clans stonewall those far-flung hordes
like those beasts illuminated by ancestors
now at rest in the abyss past the fissure?