Burial Mounds

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Abstract

As mourning, moist shrouds cover faceless hours, And yesterday slips mutely by the mind, One more gear is silently ground off The disintegrating cog of time. Despite precautions, the tottering legs of age Crumble, fastened as they are to earth, Break off their brief disengagement from the soil...
As mourning, moist shrouds cover faceless hours,
And yesterday slips mutely by the mind,
One more gear is silently ground off
The disintegrating cog of time.
Despite precautions, the tottering legs of age
Crumble, fastened as they are to earth,
Break off their brief disengagement from the soil.
Days merging into long bygones create a chain
Passing into the old hills, those green, seeing things,
Omniscient,
Omnisilent,
Holding history in their train.
And, knowing it as no one else knows,
They do not sigh for the redundancy of man,
But grow old, just by getting smaller,
Those crones of hills being aged by fresh rain.

Mr. Zmolek creates a time image in his use of the mechanistic wearing away of the mountains in lines 3 and 4. He also introduces a naturalistic image in the hills crumbling and being washed away by the rains, but he does not effect a completely successful transition between the two. He leaves the reader in unnecessary vagueness. He does set up a successful juxtaposition in his image of the hills as the possessors of man’s history—all his triumphs, his tedium, his failures, his inhumanities—with his naturalistic image of the hills wearing away, suggesting the revelation of the knowledge within, and yet, as we all know, man does not learn from his history, and as Mr. Zmolek says: the mountains “do not sigh for the redundancy of man.”

—R.E.W.