

JOHN LEONARD

*Stone Ellipsis*

Those are just three rocks, right? Close together, but far enough to see the light through. Arranged in such a way that makes you wonder, or doesn't, because our eyes don't always see. Drops of dew roll off each one, unrushed and un-rusted like blood down a finger nail. Maybe they were siblings, polished and smoothed in the same river? You could find more meaning in them, say the ancients used these stones for baking, or worship; say their placement in a French cave was to honor the horizon, to leave a piece of their history for us to find. Bogus, but that's definitely a human trait, pausing to leave behind as a means to go forward. It's our strongest effort to cheapen death, to disavow dust, (or so we think). We are absolute in our certainty that we know something that the trees aren't privy to. We eat our egos, pull apart the hours, gnash our teeth and pray. We pause, open all the windows in the house flip a light switch and the moments go on. Meanwhile, an elk moves through his valley, untroubled by a brother in rehab, income taxes, or disappointing sequels. This is not callousness, nor is it a lack of *being*. It's more like a nick in the cerebellum, a small piece missing. And what do we miss, living forward and behind? Even the fox would be left asking herself: "Why human? What about today?"