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On Seeing Roman Pines

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On Seeing Roman Pines

Dance spires, churn and spin about,
    Toys of timeless wind,
Diana's witnesses, purple wood,
    Each unto Thy own,

Dost Thou still partake of shrill sounds of bronze,
    Forged amongst hot fires,
Nursed by Etruscan prodigy,
That serve to feed the craving mistress of
    Mediterranean isles,
Breathing flames upon altars of crystal sand,

    The sun sets, the wind lulls Thee,
Selfsame force, that now as then,
Fleets hauntingly over flagstones
    once hot with pride,
And raises little blurred hills of Appian dust,
    pieces of arches,
Which rung with echoes of selfish song.

Reborn on the very lips of those men,
    Whose inheritance is Thine,
Whose rough impersonal hands,
Debase the graven, dead Facades,
To build, see, hear again,
Fluted stone, blinding brass, iron hooves,
That which Thy innocence proclaims to be the
    ways of little children,
Whose joyful shrieks break the soul of
    wakened evening.

LAWRENCE FLECKENSTEIN