

## OZYMANDIAS, III

*after Shelley, after Smith*

*Mark S. Bauer*

Never a toppled head or planted shins  
with their ironic plaque left mocking us;  
never a wilderness where citizens  
once lived. No: Never Ozymandias.  
Martial was wrong with his commissioned verses:  
They'll both endure, our letter and our stone—  
and copper too. Or so we hope: She nurses  
dreams of *huddled masses, tempest-blown*—  
who first were *wretched refuse, homeless*, thrown  
against hard shores. We tourists who drop by  
to mount her stairstep spine, perhaps to try  
to visit observation decks closed down  
as *Dangerous*—we'll keep her from the sands.  
And risk the words on which she, hollow, stands.

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