

Mine Eyes Have Seen the Gory



Artifacts are positioned carefully as monuments,
people frozen in
photographs
statues
paintings
tapestries
inviting the living to join
long-dead rapacious mercenaries
posing as heroes
whose exploits of ravaging the land
are heralded in songs of conquest and bloodshed.

These heroes rode the back of Turtle Island
until her shell was crushed into fine powder
then used as fertilizer to better sow the seeds
of her utter annihilation – and that of her people.

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Should not the vanquished
who fought the good fight
be heralded in songs
that speak truth
unspoken in textbooks?

But, alas, how can the murdered be thought of as heroes?

Little wonder tributes to a vanquished culture
of those that lived on Turtle Island
without pulverizing her into submission
and then into a dusty death,
if they exist at all,
are consigned to dank corners
in the recesses of our shrines,
and minds,
built to honor the shameless conquest of Turtle Island,
tributes to blood and old glory
not being in their nature.

April 17, 2023

Day 17 Prompt: **Day 17 Prompt:** Find a museum that has an online exhibit and explore for a while. Then, free-write for five minutes using this experience as inspiration (you can choose to focus on the experience as a whole or on a single object in the museum). Then, find a seed in your free-writing to use as a starting place for today's poem. This could be a resonant image or idea, or a meaningful phrase.

CREDITS: Lithograph of the [Battle of Little Bighorn](#) (1903), Charles Marion Russell from Library of Congress (public domain). Museums visited:

[Little Big Horn National Monument](#)

[Randell Research Center](#)

[Key Marco Historical Museum](#)

[Mound Key Archaeological State Park](#)

[Big Mound Key-Bogges Ridge Archaeological District](#)