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Mary Leakey's Poem

Ross Talarico

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Mary Leakey’s Poem · 
Ross Talarico

3½ million years ago,  
In a land we now call  
Tanzania  
Two hominids walked  
75 ft. and beyond  
Over a fresh layer of  
Volcanic ash  
Leaving the footprints we  
Follow studiously  
Toward the faint light.

One was smaller  
Than the other, and probably  
Female. It is easy  
To see  
That she stopped, paused,  
And turned to the left  
To glance  
At some possible threat  
Or irregularity,  
And then continued  
To the north.

We stop,  
And glance off in the  
Same direction,  
Seeing nothing but  
The faded desert moon abandoned  
In the deep blue  
Of millions of skies, all that  
Time to  
Think it over, and yet  
We turn, a moment  
Of doubt,  
Inheriting the grace of hesitancy,  
And then continue,  
Companions,  
Toward the faint, mysterious  
Light.