

## The Old Man of the Mountain

I thought "The Indians" had carved him  
Right out of the side of the mountain. And  
Somehow they had done this just for me.  
To show me their God. Mountain. Rock.  
Time. I had never known a man that old.  
That grand. The only tourist attraction my  
Family could afford, he was on the way to  
Every vacation we took, "When's The Old Man  
Of the Mountain, Daddy?" "Is this the right moun-  
Tain Daddy?" "Where is he?" And never have you  
Seen a child so saddened by fog. I was the first in my  
Family to notice the New Hampshire State Route  
Signs borrowed his profile, and my father  
Said I was the smartest little girl in New  
England. I wrote about the old man in  
My seventh grade extra credit journal and  
In red pen, the teacher wrote, "Yes, Robin, you  
Love him, but how does he make you *feel*?" Every  
Year we drove by him. Every year he was there.  
Now time itself has fallen. I grieve as for a relative,  
A friend, a God. I am grown. I can accept this.  
Even things that aren't supposed to change, change.  
I can afford more extravagant tourist  
Attractions for my children, but on our  
Way there, I know I will look for him.  
Every time.