

Monument Maker

Jeanne Julian

Kim Matthews Wheaton
Clearing Up

Monument Maker

Colorado National Monument

"Singlehanded he has opened this great playground to the world."—Walter Walker,
Grand Junction Daily Sentinel, April 1909

John Otto traced every unnamed
vein of unclaimed canyon,

touched warm Precambrian pulse
echoing bighorn thunder, drank
scarlet from claret cup cactus blossom,
paused in awe of red-tail hawk's claws
clutching cottontail aloft,
absorbed collared lizard's gaze,
trod lichen crusts, dodged potholes,
scaled the so dominant
Colorado monolith, with boundless
sunlit sky as his own skull
clouded by two thoughts:

Woolworth will build a tower twice as tall.

and


What if this is lost.

As salve for love, Otto took
pick and shovel to cliff and mesa,
called his favorite summit
Independence, and into it
drilled holes, hammered iron pipe,
chiseled steps high
in desert sandstone bone.
"Feels like the heart
of the world to me,"
he told his bride Beatrice,
who soon fled their tent at the foot
of her tamed red rock rival,
pursued by two thoughts:

Is wilderness preserved still wild?

and

What if he had not.



Jeanne Julian's chapbook is Blossom and Loss (Longleaf Press).
Prairie Wolf Press Review, Poetry Quarterly, Lascaux Prize 2016



Anthology, Kakalak, PacificReview, The Ravensperch, Wraparound South, and other journals have published her poetry, which also has won awards sponsored by *The Comstock Review, Naugatuck River Review*, The North Carolina Poetry Society, and the Asheville Writers' Workshop. www.jeannejulian.com

