

Early Man

for Robert J. Sanyer

I look up at a skull of Homo neanderthalensis
on a shelf with other skulls of prehistoric men,
mounted on steel rods:
Australopithecus boisei
Homo erectus
Australopithecus aethiopicus.

Not the actual bone, they are casts
made from high-grade, polyurethane resin.

These replicas show changes in features:
nose, jawline, cheekbone, cranial capacity,
the head getting larger, heavier over time.

I picture them burning a path with growing intelligence,
early hominids evolving, awakening to new ways:
walking upright, putting down roots.

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