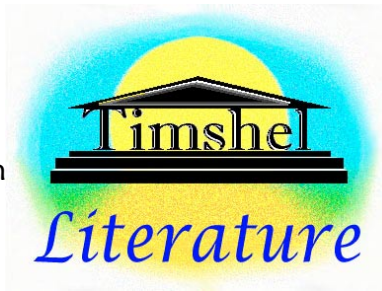


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Just Thinking, 05/19/03:

Meetings on the Road, VI: The Race to the Top

by Justin Katz

I walked a ways, on a forested climb,
with a young couple with eyes on the top.
As the clouds rouged, the pair fretted the time
and strode quickly past the scenic backdrop.

Regretting that they wouldn't have the chance,
as far as they knew, to return that way,
they hurried to take in the broad expanse
while the sun burned off the last of the day.

"According to legend," the man explained,
"lovers who collect the sunset's riches
from the summit will have unions unstrained
by want, boredom, or distracted itches."

Though slighting other pleasures of the park,
when they achieved the apex, it was dark.