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First Impressions

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FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Alayna Drollinger

The other day, I met a man who looked just like Cicero. His hair curled in flat grey rings about his ears, in accordance with the style of the latter days of Rome. His forehead lay bare and broad and wrinkled in the middle, as if in the midst of formulating such pithy remarks as “abuse the plaintiff” or “sane men don’t dance.” His nose protruded from his face like a chunk of marble, two eyes rudely squashed on either side and contorted to show lines of wry humor and stifled laughter. A heavy chin had attached itself to the jawline and rounded the features to a genial edge, still good for cutting. At any moment there might drop from his lips those dry epitaphs that had earned his head such an auspicious place upon the Forum walls. Perhaps this man before me was Cicero—reborn, the sage reincarnated, the oracle returned to flay the flesh of tender men with quick wit and sharp glances. Yet as this Cicero turned, I glimpsed peeking from those grey curls like the eye of a bearded cyclops peering at the world in bleary consternation, a bald spot. I reconsidered. Perhaps he was not quite Cicero.