

base. If I squint, they look like they're floating. Too big to be a knick-knack, too small to be a centerpiece. I could put one on my bedside table, but no one would see it except for me. No matter where I put one, no one would see it except for me. A truly indulgent purchase.

Nevertheless, I'm looking at the *Triceratops*. They're beautiful pieces of an herbivorous creature with three horns and a bony frill. The fragments are in my price range—only \$35. That seems cheap for something that was once a living, breathing being. Thirty-five dollars for an echo of an eight-ton life. That echo is no longer even a bone. Over time, under layers of sediment, minerals from the surrounding environment replaced the minerals in the bone. What's left is a copy—exactly the same, but undeniably different.

The lives I've collected so far have all been small. They're invertebrates and they're currently in a drawstring bag in the back of a closet at my parent's house. I didn't bring them with me when I moved out. They didn't feel important enough to take up space in the car or in my new little apartment. A eurypterid head is not on any packing list. I needed Pyrex dishes. Pillowcases. My first vacuum.

But it was odd to not have any rocks around. I tried to leave things behind, the geology degree and my childhood bedroom and those echoes of other lives, but I wasn't any good at it. In the months leading up to this show, I became desperate. I grabbed a hunk of unremarkable granite from outside the mall. I found a little piece of slate near my taco place. I pocketed a piece of sandstone from the park. Humans like to do this kind of thing. There's a word for it: manuport—a natural object, often a stone, that has been moved by humans, but otherwise remains unchanged. I think it's an attempt to connect with the past, which is so beautifully solidified in stone.

David is telling me something about his fossil hunting trips when I catch a phrase I've never heard before: The Monday Bum.

"The Monday Bum?" I ask.

"The Monday Bum," he repeats. "On the first Monday of a hunt, you pick up everything, all those crappy fossils. And then by the end of the week,