

*Setting Out* by Scott Cairns

*Pilgrim: What is it that you do here?*

*Monk: We fall, and we get up again.*

In time, even the slowest pilgrim might  
articulate a turn. Given time enough,

the slowest pilgrim—even he—might  
register some small measure of belated

progress. The road was, more or less, less  
compelling than the hut, but as the benefit

of time allowed the hut's distractions to attain  
a vaguely musty scent, and all the novel

knickknacks to acquire a fine veneer of bone-  
white dust, the road became then somewhat more

attractive, and as the weather made a timely  
if quite brief concession, the pilgrim took this all

to be an open invitation to set out.