MONOLOGUE of HE-WHO-STANDS-ERECT

I pulled away a first fistful of undergrowth ... and froze - astonished, stunned. There, on the ground before me, was a stone. Not an ordinary stone. Rather, one cut, fashioned, in the ancient way. A sacred stone. One of those spoken of only in the old stories ... unseen by anyone in living memory ... yet, there it lay.

Frightened, unsure of what to do, I sat, numbed, entranced, unable to move ... seemingly anchored to the earth with the weight of the meaning of this event.

My breathing slowed ... my eyes, a fixed stare ... my mind, gossamer threads of disconnected thought which, nonetheless, formed a fabric, a pattern of color, swirling shades and hues ... a depiction of ... of what, I did not know. Thus I waited ...

[long pause – reflection]

So much is lost to me of the ancient ways.

The following day, I returned and sat, again ... unsure of why I had come ... less sure of what was to be done. For days, weeks – I do not know - I returned, as on each preceding day, drawn to that spot, and sat, silently ... watching, waiting ... for some purpose to be made clear to me.

I told no one of what I had found.

A great length of time ensued. One morning, I arose, my hair now gray, a strange calmness in my heart. I did not "return" to that spot. Rather, I went there as one on a journey ... coming to a place, a space, a conclusion ... not an end, not one of my own choosing, at least, but no less certain for all of that.

At first I sat ... in sign of greeting ... then, with the force of a gently rolling wave, I rose and pulled away another fistfull of growth. Another stone. With quickening pulse, I pulled another and yet another, uncovering under each, another stone, until, in some length of time, before me lay a sacred way, a path, a field, fallen walls, scattered mounds – a sacred, blessed, holy ground.

And I, not a religious man, felt the presence of God ... some power ... if not a being, then a force, which impelled me onward from day to day. And thus my purpose was made clear – to re-build this place ... to lift one stone upon another, again, and yet again, until my life force, spent, I could lift no more.

[He turns, begins to walk, stops, turns ... words fail – finally he speaks ...]

May you each find a sacred stone.