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Gregory Djanikian

The Tower of Babel

The whole earth had one language and one will,
the many thought as one, the one as all,
and to consecrate this harmony of spirit,
a simple tower seemed appropriate.

Now as each stone fell cleanly into place,
a vast imagination took shape, rose
unerringly beyond man, mountain, cloud,
obedient to its steep ascent toward God. . . .

But, under the strain of willing so much weight
impossibly upward, the delicate language fractured
into noise, and none could speak his mind.

We build what we must. Yet, that towers be great
enough to reach a god, we must refine
the difficult architecture of a word.

Gregory Djanikian holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Pennsylvania and an M. A. in creative writing from Syracuse University. He has been affiliated with the New York State Poets in the Schools program and has been published in numerous journals including *The Nation* and *The American Scholar*. Mr. Djanikian is currently an instructor of English at Syracuse University.