



Olduvai stone-chipping tool. The British Museum.

James Bybee

The Eden Stone

A child's belief
that joys can
extend beyond
bedtime, that a
game will amuse at
every playing –
leaves him, little
by little. Each
joy becomes a
chore. Every
game will come to
mock him. The
loss of amusement
drives the old man
he becomes to
search a seashore
for a single grain
of the Eden Stone.

One last legend
that may never be
found.

From reddened
eyes he peers
with amusement at the
other old seabirds
who look down,
like him, at the
beach, studying it
like a map of an
unknown land.
Looking up from time to
time to look at the sea,
and to hear
fragments carried
by the wind from
ancient and future
times.

James Bybee, who died earlier this year, was a poet,
novelist and playwright and one of the founding members
of *Caveat Lector* in 1989.