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ROCKY HILL: GROUND AND FIGURE

A child is taken to a park where dinosaur footprints are on display under a plastic dome. *See? See there?* But he sees nothing, only empty spaces where sandy shale is not. In concerts he listens for the intervals. He cannot learn to read sheet music, for he sees only the holes in the whole notes and hears music in the curves of the rests. In reading class his eye skips to the spaces between words and his ear picks up the breaths between sentences. He sits patiently in school and learns nothing; the minute the dismissal bell stops ringing he begins to be educated. As he grows to manhood, he falls in love with the white spaces that surround the profiles of silent women in silhouettes. He sings hymns during liturgical silences, prays on Mondays and works on the Sabbath. He knows that when he dies he will go to Limbo, even though the rabbis have never acknowledged it and the priests have declared it deserted.