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Visiting the Sistine

M.J. Dolan

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Emma stopped, letting Sammy stand before her, only this close to losing the game of tag.

“Okay,” she said, obedient at the mention of food. She turned to Sammy. “I have to go.” Sammy nodded, his heart returning to that packed-away place inside of him. Emma met her father on the sidewalk and they began their trek down the bike path. A biking person whizzed past them. Sammy followed a step behind on his side of the fence, searching for his voice.

“Do you come to that playground a lot, Emma?”

“Sometimes. Do you go to the fence-playground a lot?”

“Sometimes.”

“Then I’ll see you some time.”

“Okay.”

Emma smiled goodbye, taking her father’s hand. Her pigtailed flopped once more as she let her gaze slide off of Sammy to look forward. Sammy continued to follow along the fence until it made a corner around the edge of the property. He stood at the junction. The bike trail wound on, taking Emma and her father with it. Sammy pressed himself against the fence, only just now feeling the separation of it.

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M.J. Dolan

Struggling to keep the guide in sight,
I surged with my group
through a narrowing door. It was
like giving birth in reverse.

The entrance was disappointing, dark and dingy;
the walls echoed with the babble
of multi-linguaged guides competing to explain
in loud whispers, soft shouts.
Their words counterpointed
by the clicks and whirs
of legions of cameras erupting.

I leaned against the wall and stared up.
The noise faded and all distractions fled.
Eternally, Adam, naked, reaches out
while God the Father reaches
toward his son.

My mind reeled when I first looked down
and I was dizzy until
the flow of blood to my brain
resumed its usual course.

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