I.

I explore outside, this neighborhood of fallen leaves and dew-capped grass.

Walking along these crowded streets. Among *these* busy people.

In the early morning before school begins, there are always children playing in the empty fields of grass and stones and broken dreams.

For a while I watch a childhood I never had.

The rising and falling.

Swinging wildly across the monkey bars of the jungle gym.

Playing tag with others at the park.

But suddenly I am tossed back, pushed into a world of anomie—time slowed to echo in vast canyons[1] where they glare at me with startled indignation.

And here, the local children race through piles of gathered leaves.

Scattering them about in a flurry of excitement.

And so, the work begins again to toil, as my father requested.

Scraping across this yard until dying grass is revealed or sweat falls, barely noticed in this biting autumn cold.

It is a time of mid-life crises.

Of re-evaluating one's condition.

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