

Dinosaurs

The children love the dinosaurs because the dinosaurs were doomed too and didn't know it either. Take, for example, this group of fourth graders pushing and shoving and shuffling through the Museum of Natural History, like a long line of cockeyed cursive letters in a penmanship book, each resting a hand on the shoulder of the next, walking elephant-fashion under the enormous skeletons, whose names are so long that if you stood them up vertically they might reach the small brains of the dinosaurs themselves. Poor little mammoths, disappearing off the face of themselves, growing up much too soon—already they are beginning to forget what the rest of us can't for the life of us remember either. First their imaginations will dry up, then they'll spend their lives putting out volcanoes, and eating their rivals, and straining upward with pursed, prehensile lips toward happiness, that greenest, furthest frond in the canopy.

—Paul Hostovsky

