

Worksheet

On the Other Side of the Poem

by Rachel H. Korn

On the other side of the poem there is an orchard,
and in the orchard, a house with a roof of straw,
and three pine trees,
three watchmen who never speak, standing guard.

On the other side of the poem there is a bird,
yellow brown with a red breast,
and every winter he returns
and hangs like a bud in the naked bush.

On the other side of the poem there is a path
as thin as a hairline cut,
and someone lost in time
is treading the path barefoot, without a sound.

On the other side of the poem amazing things may happen,
even on this overcast day,
this wounded hour
that breathes its fevered longing in the windowpane.

On the other side of the poem my mother may appear
and stand in the doorway awhile lost in thought,
then call me home as she used to call me home long ago,
You've played enough, Rachel. Don't you see? It's night.

(Translated from the Yiddish by Seymour Levitan)

Tomorrow

by Sarah Stretch, San Mateo County

On the other side of tomorrow
amazing things are happening.
On the other side of tomorrow,
yesterday happens again.

On the other side of tomorrow,
the sun is shining,
children run through a bright, mossy
forest.

On the other side of tomorrow,
little children's grandpas don't die.

On the other side of tomorrow,
rainbows stretch across the world,
the wet fog is gone,
leaving only a clear day.

The Field Out Back

(for my young poetry students)

by Perie Longo, poet-teacher

On the other side of the field behind
our house, rabbits are running for cover,
young coyotes cry for their parents—
I come eye to eye with one,
offer it some bread, but it runs from me
as all wild things do, me with the smell
of enemy, of flesh. Me who wants
the best for anyone near or far.

This poem wants to hold them, build
burrows and caves with extra covers
thrown over the old redwood table
under the tangerine tree. On the other side
of the field once there were weeds
so high they hid my favorite oak
on the farthest hill, where I used to walk
with my children, exploring animal tracks
on Sunday between pancakes and typing
your poems for safekeeping. Now weeds
are plowed down, the animals gone.

On the other side of the field there is still
the Eucalyptus grove that edges an old spring
once used to heal a person's aches. Moss
of the wildest green used to grow there, haven
for tadpoles we'd bring home until frogs,
then let them go again like this, my poem
to you that houses hope for their return.

