

Terezin

By: Hanus Hachenburg

Adapted by Fishtank Staff

1 That bit of filth in dirty walls,
And all around barbed wire,
And 30,000 souls who sleep
Who once will wake
5 And once will see
Their own blood spilled.

I was once a little child,
Three years ago,
That child who longed for other worlds.

10 But now I am no more a child
For I have learned to hate.
I am a grown-up person now,
I have known fear.

Bloody words and a dead day then,
15 That's something different than bogeymen!

But anyway, I still believe I only sleep today,
That I'll wake up, a child again, and start to laugh and play.
I'll go back to childhood sweet like a briar rose,
Like a bell that wakes us from a dream,

20 Like a mother with an ailing child
Loves him with aching woman's love.
How tragic, then, is youth that lives
With enemies, with gallows ropes,
How tragic, then, for children on your lap
25 To say: this for the good, that for the bad.

Somewhere, far away out there, childhood sweetly sleeps,
Along that path among the trees,
There o'er that house
That was once my pride and joy.

30 There my mother gave me birth into this world
So I could weep . . .

In the flame of candles by my bed, I sleep
And once perhaps I'll understand
That I was such a little thing,
25 As little as this song.

These 30,000 souls who sleep
Among the trees will wake,
Open an eye
And because they see
40 A lot

They'll fall asleep again . . .

Hachenburg, H. (1994). Terezin. In H. Volavková (Ed.), *I never saw another butterfly: Children's drawings and poems from Terezin concentration camp, 1942–1944* (pp. 20–21). Schoken.

Homesick

By: Anonymous

Adapted by Fishtank Staff

1 I've lived in the ghetto here for more than a year,
In Terezin, in the black town now,
And when I remember my old home so dear,
I can love it more than I did, somehow.

5 Ah, home, home,
Why did they tear me away?
Here the weak die easy as a feather
And when they die, they die forever.

I'd like to go back home again,
10 It makes me think of sweet spring flowers.
Before, when I used to live at home,
It never seemed so dear and fair.

I remember now those golden days . . .
But maybe I'll be going there soon again.

15 People walk along the street,
You see at once on each you meet
That there's ghetto here,
A place of evil and fear.
There's little to eat and much to want,
20 Where bit by bit, it's horror to live.
But no one must give up!
The world turns and times change.

Yet we all hope the time will come
When we'll go home again.

25 Now I know how dear it is
And often I remember it.

Anonymous. (1994). Homesick. In H. Volavková (Ed.), *I never saw another butterfly: Children's drawings and poems from Terezin concentration camp, 1942–1944* (pp. 46–47). Schoken.

I Am a Jew

By: Franta Bass

Adapted by Fishtank Staff

1 I am a Jew and will be a Jew forever.
Even if I should die from hunger,
never will I submit.
I will always fight for my people,
5 on my honor.
I will never be ashamed of them,
I give my word.

I am proud of my people,
how dignified they are.
10 Even though I am suppressed,
I will always come back to life.

Bass, F. (1994). I am a Jew. In H. Volavková (Ed.), *I never saw another butterfly: Children's drawings and poems from Terezin concentration camp, 1942–1944* (p. 57). Schoken.