

Danuta Mucha

Glimpses of our childhood

Afterword

If you look at a typical book for children, you can see that there are rarely grim contemporary problems dealt with in it. The bitter life of the children who are maltreated and whose human rights are violated is far from resembling the happy ending of most of the fables and fairy tales. Contrary to the popular notion of children's books, Karolina Kusek presents a different attitude to poems for children in her new volume titled "Glimpses of our childhood".

She comes as a voice of conscience of the epoch of haphazards and no moral codes. The voice, yet, is not an intrusive teaching but a tear in the poet's eye, the one that feels more and deeper than the commercialized, money-ruled world. This book is similar to her poetic style but carries heavier and more serious issues. She sees a poor, anguished child not only in her country but in Africa and other parts of the world. The poet helplessly calls out for Pegasus to return to earth as "from that far earth is but a drop of water, a sand bead movable on the thread orbit"...The earth, the poet warns, is not just a grain, but it is ruled by a dull day full of anxiety and tears rolling down a child's face, generation by generation; the poet-child generation to her grandchild. So far nobody has stopped the tears from falling because "...they only had their handkerchiefs as dams" Karolina Kusek, a contemporary Konopnicka(a famous Polish poet and children's books writer of the second half of 19th century harsh realism period), like her, depicts an image of a forlorn, sorrowful and hungry child. Yet Kusek doesn't lose hope that a better world will be born. The book finishes with a poem The Ark in which "a child with a flower and a dove.." appears and stands up against all evil stressing the poet's hope. Her biblical Noah's Ark sails through children's dull days to..." an island of green and a rainbow in the sky after the deluge..."

The volume "Glimpses of our childhood"... blends not only with the output of Kusek, which always surprises us with fresh ideas, messages and poetic style, but also with contemporary literature for children not usually catching up with the current needs of a young reader. Karolina Kusek doesn't teach and preach- but she holds and cuddles a worried and sad contemporary child close to her heart.

