

When Will You Know?
Bozenna Urbonowicz Gilbride

You run back and forth carrying soup and bread to a shed,
You do not know who receives it, just hands that grab it.
Mother tells you if someone asks you a question about it,
Just to run back home and not answer.
It is better for the child not to know anything.

All through summer you continue doing that,
Still not knowing who receives it.
Still never seeing a person on the road.
You are a child, you would not know what is happening.

When school comes around and Communist authorities come,
Your Teacher does not speak the native language of Polish,
It is Russian.

Before they come, Teacher tells you what and how to respond.
You do not know why, you are only a child, nothing is said to a child.

Father is arrested.
You think it is because he is in the Polish army,
You do not know why,
You think you and your family are not doing something against the law.
Why would you know the real reason?
You are just a child.

Your aunt comes in the middle of the night.
Everyone is quiet, not even saying a word.
Her husband, a Polish Officer,
Is not in sight.
You wonder, but why would you know what is happening?
You are only a child.

A little later,
She is taken away by the Communists,
And shipped to Siberia.
You do not understand why it happened, you are a child.

Time passes, Father returns.
You are used to not knowing what is happening.
You leave your village, there is nothing.
Your father's farm is on fire.
You wonder about how the Ukrainians could do that.
You do not understand, you are just a child.

You and your family decide travel farther through Poland,
You end up running into the Nazis.
Hopefully you will survive.
For the first time,
You are not the only one who does not understand,
What is happening.
You are not the only one who understands as much as a child.

The Ukrainians come back for you.
All through the night,
You feel bullets passing right by you.
You hear the whizzing of bullets.
You do not know why this is happening, you are only a child.

The Nazis force you to Germany,
You are told that there you will have a home, food, and everything you need.
Then cattle cars come and they push everyone in very quickly.
You do not know how it will truly be there, you are just a child.

When you arrive you are sent to work in the fields with other children.

You contract tuberculosis,

Everything goes by you.

You can not remember anything.

You wonder why someone would treat others like this.

You do not know.

You are only a child.

Miraculously, you get better.

Then, you are sent to a concentration camp.

You stay there until you are liberated.

You are a survivor.

That is what you know.