

Ages 11-14: A Poem and Story Starter

Spring Street

On Spring Street, we have magic matchstick lamps,
Lamps that glow as fireflies and leap as lambs,
Lamps wearing halo hats from dusk 'til dawn,
Lamps standing as knights at our castle's door.

This sunrise the clouds are cozy white flames,
The birds sing of warm days and play sky games,
Petals glow, raindrops sow, rivers flow so strong,
A marshmallow breeze whispers we belong.

Grass grows tall as velveteen rabbit ears,
Ears gently waving in giggles and in tears,
Hearing sunny dapples as soft jazz notes,
Notes of light, notes of sound in joyous coats.

Bonny birdsong as Time's most divine dime,
Is spent freely by angel-birds sublime,
Their song notes are courageous heart-flame motes,
Long camouflaged in long winter storm notes.

Spring Street's bonny trees have silent brown bark,
Blessed guardians of day, twilight and dark,
Of legendary grace and keepers of heart-wood rings,
Rings born of Sun's syrup, not bitter things.

Warm breezes bustle as kite-ribbon streams,
Warmer birdsong weaves as lost kite-string dreams,
As each green flame-flute sweet-symphony sows,
Vivid petal cellophane-velvet glows.

How Spring's light and puddle halos say, "Hi!"
Greeting the childish soul's innocent eye,
Folding dreams within warm wonder to grow,
To sprout as acorns to oak-marshmallow.

Story Starter: **Spring Street**

Spring Street had wallowed all these long winter months. Woe was there in the feeble light. Sadness had clung as if believing itself camouflaged. Cold as it was, we felt it. Nobody needs eyes for the constant sapping of heat. Yet spring called us as a quiet song. Its notes were written in the light as a lullaby. Low clouds could own the sky, rolling as a pencil drawn pebble beach, but they could not erase its sunny words. The rain warmed in the smallest increments, in barely perceptible shades of heat and remained cool. Again, we felt it in magnitudes, for hope is a master that magnifies each merry mote. We could dine happily on its generosity and the winter was clueless to its budding tendrils. Then, one by one, the trees that lined the avenue opened as portals and through them stepped...

Prompt questions:

- How does the poet use the contrast between "winter storm rotes" and "heart-flame motes" to establish the poem's shift in mood?
- In the story starter, what does the description of clouds as a "pencil drawn pebble beach" suggest about the atmosphere of the setting?
- How does the author use the image of the sun's "syrup" and "honey-light" as a symbol for the renewal of life and hope?
- From the narrator's perspective, how does the physical sensation of the warming rain change their internal emotional state?