

## Three Children

Translated by Freda Hodge (2015)

The rain is over  
and clouds run away.  
The sun startles awake  
and gently looks down.  
Three little children walk  
hand in hand.

One of them says:

Mother told me to come home early  
today and go  
to the new cemetery.  
Each new month  
my mother goes there.  
She said that  
at the head of Father's grave  
a small tree grows  
as small as I am,  
and the gravedigger says  
one day red apples  
will grow on this tree,  
many red apples.  
So today I must go to  
the new cemetery.  
Today it's a year since my father  
died and he has already come twice  
to Mother in her dreams  
and asked if I am behaving.

The clouds run away.  
The sky becomes bluer.  
The sun sends down  
white comfort to the earth.  
Three little children walk  
hand in hand.

The second child says:

My mother told me  
to come home early.  
Today they are bringing  
Father home from hospital.  
Four weeks he's been there  
and still hasn't come 'round  
because I'm not allowed  
to sit by his side  
and pass him the bottles  
and tell him what I am learning  
so my mother says,  
and this morning  
she sat down on my bed,  
laid her head on mine  
and shed tears:  
"Shmulik, the angel Raphael sings  
In your precious eyes."

The sky becomes bluer  
and the earth lovelier,  
with the sun's flaming light  
In the sky facing Earth,  
Three little children walk  
hand in hand.

The youngest child says:

My mother told me  
To come home early.  
In the afternoon  
she will play ball with me  
a ball with red and blue stripes  
and my mother can throw  
really high and then catch it!

And my father watches  
smiling, and kisses me

and kisses my mother too:  
Mother can throw  
so high up and catch it!

In golden candlesticks  
the sun kindles its lights,  
the world becomes bright  
as tree beckons to tree.  
And street sings out to street:  
Joy!

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(1920)