

KIP ZEGERS**from The Poet of Schools****The Poet of Schools**

The Poet of Schools looked about him.
There was no one to ask.
Daily, he went about his work,
taking water he'd drawn
from the pump, carrying it
to a well, pouring it down.
He pumped water from
the earth, he poured it back.
It had tasted sweet at first,
it tasted sweet now.
The clearer all this became,
the more steadily he pumped,
the more willing he was to pour.

The 8th Grade Class

is like a plate spinning on a pole's tip.
Or a freshet after rain, on a hillside—
what wasn't is now the rush downhill.
It's a flock of grackles in April
at 3rd Avenue & 96th Street,
big mouths for their size mouthing off.
Or harbor seals, whiskered faces
staring at shapes ashore,
that duck under, then come up again
in the surf off Coast Guard Beach.
As if to peek.
The sea is empty when they're gone.

The Poet of Schools Talks in Prose

The morning after the day on which the school's beloved French teacher died in the building, a girl from his Creative Writing class stopped by.

It was first thing. He said, "Hi! What's up?"

She said, "I just wanted to see if you were here," and looked at him. And fled. He had that sense, that she had run away. And then he had the sense of what it meant to be another's teacher, which was what he was.

Hand Over Paw

A suit approaches the Poet of Schools:
"You must measure here, now, that
which you think you are about. I have
for you in which insert results."
The poet of schools holds up one paw.
"Numbers?" "Yes there are categories
and this the test of measure is
Best Practice." The hair on Coyote's back
stands up. His howl has cadence,
its lines break. Controlling disclosure and
disguised as an English teacher,
he will be underestimated, every time.