

THE BUTTERFLY

Pavel Friedman



The last, the very last,
So richly, brightly, dazzlingly yellow.
Perhaps if the sun's tears would sing
against a white stone...

Such, such a yellow
Is carried lightly 'way up high,
It went away I'm sure because it wished to
kiss the world good-bye.

For seven weeks I've lived in here,
Pinned up inside this ghetto.
But I have found what I love here.
The dandelions call to me
And the white chestnut branches in the
court.

Only I never saw another butterfly.
That butterfly was the last one.
Butterflies don't live in here,
In the ghetto.

Poem reprinted from *I Never Saw Another Butterfly* by US Holocaust Memorial Museum, edited by Hana Volavkova, © 1978, 1933 by Artia, Prague Compilation © 1993 by Schocken Books. Used by permission of Schocken Books, a division of Random House, Inc.

Painting © Vad Yashem

About the Poet

Pavel Friedman was a young poet who lived in the Theresienstadt ghetto. Little is known of the author, but he is presumed to have been seventeen years old when he wrote "The Butterfly." The poem, dated June 4, 1942, was found amongst a hidden cache of children's work recovered at the end of World War II. Pavel was deported to Auschwitz where he died on September 29, 1944.

About the Artist

Liz Elsby, originally from New York City, has been living in Israel since 1984. She received her BFA from the Department of Visual Communications, Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in 1991. Besides being a freelance illustrator, painter, and designer, Liz also works at Yad Vashem, both as a graphic designer and as a Holocaust museum guide.