Invisible Children

By Mariana Llanos

Invisible children fall through the cracks of the system like Alice in the rabbit hole. But these children won’t find an eat-me cake or a drink-me bottle. They won’t wake up on the lap of a loving sister. They’ll open their eyes on the hand of a monster called Negligence who’ll poke them with its sharp teeth and bait them with its heartless laughter, like a wild thing in a wild rumpus. But the children won’t awake to the smell of a warm supper, nor will they find a purple crayon to draw an escape door or a window. Instead they’ll make a mirror of a murky puddle on the city street which won’t tell them they’re beautiful but it’ll show their scars, as invisible to others as these children are.

Source: Poetry (March 2021)