

Outside the Lines

Keith Waterland

Ice blue eyes, deep and alone
watch the others play.
Buck-teeth and glasses
color her outside the lines.

The children laugh at her.
She pretends not to hear,
as tears rise from her tummy
blurring her vision.

She swallows and focuses
on a coloring book in her lap.
A clown, uncolored,
smiles and winks at her.
She tickles him in multicolored
Crayola brilliance
ever so careful not to go outside the lines.

“Ring around the rosie” they sing.
She pretends not to hear,
but a little clenched hand,
with a fat purple crayon,
goes outside the lines,
giving her clown
a pocket full of posies.