

Prayer in my Boot

by Naomi Shihab Nye

For the wind no one expected

For the boy who does not know the answer

For the graceful handle I found in a field
attached to nothing
pray it is universally applicable

For our tracks which disappear
the moment we leave them

For the face peering through the cafe window
as we sip our soup

For cheerful American classrooms sparkling
with crisp colored alphabets
happy cat posters
the cage of the guinea pig
the dog with division flying out of his tail
and the classrooms of our cousins
on the other side of the earth
how solemn they are
how gray or green or plain
how there is nothing dangling
nothing striped or polka-dotted or cheery
no self-portraits or visions of cupids
and in these rooms the students raise their hands
and learn the stories of the world

For library books in alphabetical order
and family businesses that failed
and the house with the boarded windows
and the gap in the middle of a sentence
and the envelope we keep mailing ourselves

For every hopeful morning given and given
and every future rough edge
and every afternoon
turning over in its sleep