



MIKOLA AURAMCHYK

THE THREE

They put them behind wire in freezing winter,
Each one, already, solemnly had vowed
To break out of captivity, to win a
Way through the woods to their own folk, somehow.

Cold stormwinds over the whole camp were wailing,
Corpses lay by the wall, strewn in a string ...
Strength was departing from the body daily,
The eldest one could not live out the spring.

With grief and vengeance in the heart deep hidden,
All his companions could not help but grieve . . .
Like them, their friend against his death had striven,
Once more to help the foe this world to leave.

In that night, the two fled from the barracks,
Broke through the circuit-fence close to the gate,
And with them, very carefully they carried
And brought out, from beyond the wire, their mate.

In the darkness a spring wind was breathing . . .
And sitting on the grass, safely arrived,
The two felt that, now that he was in freedom
Once more, the third should straightaway revive.

1942

Translated by V. Rich