What About You?

When I look at New York, I notice the big differences in people. Some are so rich when they receive a new laptop, they show little appreciation for what they have gotten. Some are so poor that when you give them five cents, they feel lucky. I see myself caught in the middle, only able to imagine what either side is like. Then I see you, homeless, with nowhere to go.

Each time I walk past you, I feel saddened, at the same time, relieved that I’m not sitting in your place. I see your rough, bony face and droopy, red eyes that won’t lift to be happy, and I try to see into your mind.

You see busy city streets. Businessmen and women are rushing to catch the train, bus or cab. Many are heading for the ever-busy Wall Street. Mothers with their crying babies are rushing home to change their diapers and put them to sleep. Shopkeepers are heading to work, to open their stores to customers who have money to spend. Everyone is chatting, except for you. I can only imagine what you are thinking. You sit alone with no one to talk to and nowhere to go. My day darkens when I see you, but only in my heart and soul for the sun still shines on your face and the people still walk in that rushed way. They don’t even notice you. I wonder if you feel that no one cares about you just because you’re different. Do you think they realize how lucky they are?

I see your stomach thin and tense from the little food you get and I remember all the good food I had in the past. These are the times I feel guilty and spoiled and wish I hadn’t had so much or thought to share the extra.

You probably wish summer were still here for the cold means even harder times. We both don’t like winter but for different reasons. You, because it makes living an even bigger challenge. Me, it’s just because of bad weather and not as much sports. I see your one-all-around year outfit, stained, dirty, ripped and itchy. And when you move, more holes break out. I think of all the new clothes I got for the school year, which could, for you, be a lifetime supply. For me, probably only 6-8 months, at most. It doesn’t seem fair.

You look trapped, for possibilities are slim. For when you have no “play” possessions and are broke, what can you do? I look at your weak, thin, stiff muscles, while
you jiggle the few coins in your coffee cup. And I remember my allowance, like a treasure for you, but for me, not that much. I admit, I’ve never lived in your world, though I try to imagine it. As you wait for another coin, you must think of your life, your hard, hard life. Alone, in a world you share with no one. Though thousands pass living their lives, you sit on the edge of the sidewalk and jiggle the few coins in your coffee cup and I see clearly now, that’s your life. As you sit, do you wonder if it will ever change? You must hope so. I know I do.

*Sam’s writing, p. 2.*