

Last Day of the Year

by J. Richards

The year is nearly over
 And the job is almost done
 Displays are coming down
 And the kids are having fun

The playground games are knocked and worn
 The hopscotch lines are faded
 There's burnout in the staff room
 Where each face looks somewhat jaded

Some families have already flown
 To villas in the Med.
 Where they'll waste their time and money
 Getting bored and very red

The rest of us wait patiently
 Until the final bell
 A golden moment of relief
 For kids and staff as well

When the new stock starts arriving
 There are piles of glossy books
 Topped with mounds of HB pencils
 And replacement cloakroom hooks

Some new-look plastic dinner-trays
 Are hiding the detergent
 While blank CDs are with the pads
 Marked "Do today" and "urgent!"

The caretaker is in his shed
 Repairing broken shelves
 While teachers sort their rooms out
 Helped by hoards of willing elves

With ten long minutes left to wait
 Excitement fills the air
 The clock's the sole attention now
 As statues stand and stare

Like stallions our heartbeats race
 The end is now in sight
 The second hand ticks loud and clear
 As in the dead of night

Still and silent waits the world
 For when it will be free
 From cricket in the undergrowth
 To songbird in the tree

It seems that all the motions
 Of the universe have ceased
 The orbits of the planets
 The breath of every beast

Minutes turn to seconds
 And then the countdown starts:
 Ten, nine, eight to three, two one
 The summer holiday has begun!