

Norbert's Climb

by J. Richards

The playground was so noisy
 With the sound of children playing
 That the teachers with their coffees
 Could not hear what they were saying

The girls were singing skipping songs
 The boys were playing ball
 And the worst noise was the muffled shouting
 Coming from the pool

And nobody was busy
 With a business but his own
 And nobody had noticed
 Norbert Nash was all alone

So Little Norbert thought
 That it was safe to start his climb
 He made sure that the coast was clear
 Then quickly checked the time

He'd watched the big boys often –
 Knew just where to step and grip
 Now, at last, it was his own turn
 For a treetop trekking trip!

His heart was racing faster
 Than the swallows in the sky
 He thought that he might touch them
 If he made it quite that high

But now he swallowed hard
 And felt an apple in his throat
 When he thought of Mum's raw anger
 Should he tear his brand new coat

But Norbert would be careful
 He would sprint up like a cat
 (Though cats do not like coming down –
 Now, he'd not thought of that!)

One final spy around himself
 To look for nosy eyes
 Then Norbert took a giant leap
 (Considering his size)

“Just don't look down!” he told himself
 As one branch snapped and fell
 But felt sick to discover
 That he didn't climb so well

But it was too late now that he was
 Half way up the tree
 To give up on his mission –
 He had dared himself, you see!

For Norbert was a sorry chap
 Who had no friends at all
 And all the children laughed at him
 Because he was so small

So Norbert thought, quite simply,
 That if he could prove himself
 The others would stop taunting him
 And calling him “the elf.”

But things were going wrong for him –
 His climb was a mistake
 And rotten branches underfoot
 Were threatening to break

It wasn't very long
 Before poor Norbert had been seen
 At first the children joked and gibed
 And giggled in between

But soon it was quite clear to all
 The joke was running dry
 And all the faces dropped
 As Norbert Nash began to cry

They hadn't really cared before
 But now they saw for real
 How very small their torments
 Could make little Norbert feel

Now some of them had realized
 That the tree was giving way
 And the honest fear in Norbert's eyes
 Told more than he could say

The teachers were upset
That they'd not noticed Norbert climbing
But now they acted quickly
And arrived with perfect timing

And when the creaking branches
Could not bear his weight at all
Six teachers held a sheet aloft
To break poor Norbert's fall

He was upset, but, thankfully,
He suffered not a scratch
And the teachers were the heroes
For a quite heroic catch.

But then came all the questions
And once Norbert's heart was known
Both his parents and his teachers
Realised just how sad he'd grown.

So they put their heads together
To work out what could be done
To help Norbert to be happier
And have a little fun

At last it was decided
That he simply needed friends
So they searched for children willing
To shake hands and make amends

And after what had happened
They found lots of children keen
To be friendly towards Norbert –
To be kind instead of mean

The moral of the story is that
Bullying is cruel
And if you see it happening
To someone in your school

Make sure a teacher knows as well
But, really, in the end
You'll cheer the victim up as well
By being their new friend!