

That Awful Eye

by J. Richards

That awful eve, that nervous night  
I sat right through it bolt upright –  
In order to push off the day  
I did not let sleep come my way.

And yet as I remained awake  
That also proved a bad mistake  
For I could not expel the thought  
Though I did try to think of naught

The minutes and the hours passed  
Replaced by new ones far too fast  
And as the birds announced first light  
I wished that it was still the night

I swiveled slowly out of bed  
My heavy heart so full of dread  
For what the day would bring my way –  
I feared it more than words can say.

My heart and head both thumped in time  
As Gran's old clock began to chime  
And though I'd soon be asked to eat  
I cared for neither plain nor sweet

As I messed up my tidy bed  
A little voice inside me said:  
"You haven't told your Mum and Dad  
Of all the worry that you've had."

The voice was right  
And I knew well – but long ago – that I should tell  
But I just never had the strength  
To speak about it all at length

Call me a coward, if you please,  
Tell me some boys just like to tease  
But I know, if you think that's true,  
That no one's ever bullied you...

...The smell of toasted waffles  
Wafted warmly through the door  
Mum's waffles were delicious  
And I always asked for more

But this morning was quite different  
For my appetite was failing  
As the image came to mind  
Of being held against that railing

So, having dressed, I went downstairs  
And nibbled on some toast  
But my mother saw right through me  
Saying: "you look like a ghost!"

I couldn't keep it from her any longer  
Though I tried  
But it wasn't any longer  
Something that I wished to hide

Well, I told her the full story:  
It all started with a joke  
And I didn't mind, at first  
About the fun he used to poke

I used to go around with him  
I used to be his friend  
And though, one day, he might be mean  
The next day it would end.

Then over time, things got much worse  
I don't remember how  
But he began to bully me  
And has done until now.

I don't know why he hates me  
If, indeed, that is the case  
Or why he'd start to greet me  
With a grimace on his face

Sometimes I think it's my fault  
Something I've done or said  
But I know that's a silly thought  
With which to fill my head

How silly to imagine  
That I could be to blame  
When it's just a horrid boy  
Who's found a nasty selfish game

But even though I know all that  
I don't feel any better  
Especially since today's the day  
He mentioned in his letter.

It seemed from Mum's response  
That this had come as a surprise  
She tried to hide her worry  
But it still showed in her eyes.

As Mum put down the porridge  
And picked up a jug of milk  
She said, "What letter's this then?"  
With her voice as smooth as silk

I had it in my pocket  
But I didn't want to say  
So I just explained,  
"He wants me to bring something in today."

Mum asked to see the letter  
And I thought, "I might as well,"  
Though he'd warned me he'd be quite upset  
If ever I should tell.

As Mum put on her glasses  
And sat down to read the note  
I realised what I'd done  
And felt a football in my throat

But once the ball was swallowed  
And my butterflies had flown  
I felt relieved, now, that  
I was no longer on my own.

Mum looked at me, and smiled, and said:  
"We'll end this right away  
And, yes, you will be taking something  
In to school today.

But it will be your mother  
And, once I have seen the Head,  
That bully will regret  
He ever wrote what I just read."

My parents and my teachers joined  
To sort the whole thing out  
Now I'm a happy pupil –  
Well, that's what it's all about!