

## BULLYING

I was bullied once before.  
I didn't enjoy it.  
They knew they were hurting  
And yet kept on doing it.

The day started off lovely, I was happy and carefree,  
Then they came and they started to mock and to tease,  
They were older, stronger, and more powerful too  
And then there was just me, starting to feel confused and all blue.

Should I retort? Should I hit back?  
Am I brave enough to report them and finish that?  
What did I do to deserve this pain?  
Maybe I'm the reason I'm stuck in this one-sided game.

Their actions and their words swam in my mind,  
Stumbling over each other in their hurry to find  
My weak spot, my insecurity, the thing that hit my nerve,  
And it did hit, but that satisfaction was not one they deserved.

I kept it inside, all bottled up,  
I sat there and watched the pressure slowly build up.  
And I couldn't even share it, because who would be friends  
With someone who gets bullied and can't even defend?

I needed to escape it, but no one to escape to,  
So, I retreated into the shadows with nothing I could do.  
The staircases, the corridors, even the bathroom stalls,  
Lying to myself that I was content within the walls.

Then one day, I got sick of all the agonising mess,  
The bottle was nearly full, and I knew what would happen next,  
I couldn't just let myself sit there and cry,  
And nothing would happen if I didn't even try.

The next time they hurled their cruel taunts at me,  
I dashed towards an adult, without even thinking,  
This was it, I thought, share your worries now,  
Seize the moment and let it all flow out.

I silently felt so grateful for her as she listened with trust,  
Saw them stare at us from afar, their mouths for once shut,  
The terror they felt was clearly visible,  
The same terror I'd gone through, but mine had just been invisible.

Suddenly I felt like I was floating,  
That choking burden had finally flown away.  
I smiled a smile, a small, sad smile  
My smile, that had at last come back to stay.

But where was that person who should have helped me?  
That little support and confidence from them was all I needed.  
And if you see it happen, what would it give to say,  
"Hey, be a little nicer, that's not okay."?

Bullying isn't a joke, it can torture any soul,  
Be it someone strong, confident, young or old,  
So, the next time you see some looking low or in pain,  
Give them that helping hand, be the one to save their day.