

# THE MOUNTBATTEN SCHOOL



## POETRY FESTIVAL 1996

**We are particularly delighted to have Julia Copus as our judge this year as she is a former pupil of Mountbatten School who has herself taken part in past poetry festivals.**

I was very impressed by the standard of this year's entries, and choosing winners is never easy: all the poems I read had something worthwhile to say. One thing that struck me was the overall lack of self-consciousness in the writing of the lower age-groups; a certain talent for telling-it-how-it-is. This is a very useful tool for poem-making, and led to a good number of original and thought-provoking poems.

### Year 7

Elinor Benton's *Evening Dive* opens with the sun setting over a quiet sea, beneath which a whale is preparing, unseen, for its dive. The focus narrows as the whale breaks the water, '...the great humped back/ curved like a crescent moon' (an image that anticipates the approaching night), and as the poem ends the water closes behind the whale, the sun withdraws, night 'creeps into the sky' and 'everything is quiet...' once more. This is a vivid and beautifully shaped poem, and shows a remarkable feel for structure.

The other prizewinning poems in Year 7 are also packed with precise and vivid images - a 'car thrown up like a tennis ball' in *The Tornado*, for example, or 'the disappearing bruise of your first fall' in *What is Grey?*, and in *Candles* the description of how 'Flickering shadows climb the wall./ Dark places fill with bursts of light.' is particularly good.

*Living in the Shadows*, by Michael Reader, is one of the few narrative poems entered by this year-group. It contains some haunting images; "Around him people's mouths dropped in horror" and "Mist circled above the gravestones". It is an ambitious theme but, once again, draws strength from its simplicity: "Was he alive? Was he dead?/ The doctor was never summoned" says very much in a few words, and the ending is moving for the same reason.

### Year 8

The poems in this year-group were a particular pleasure to read. The winning poem, *An Ocean Graveyard*, by Emma Preece, shows evidence of some considerable poetic talent. Lines like 'Wooden doors concealed by crazed limpets sway/ On rusty hinges with the current' and 'Fish, like floating, curving jewels/ Sweep with the early evening tide' display a remarkable feel for language that belies Emma's twelve years of age. The poem is well sustained throughout and the idea of a whole city lost underwater is cleverly condensed in the final image of 'a cabinet now only driftwood with a protruding handle.'

David Reeves has resisted all temptation to resort to cliché in his poem *Anger*, which he describes most memorably as '...a vase/ knocked off a shelf'. *Nothingness* and *Egg Curry* share 3rd prize; both are charming poems and demonstrate a natural feel for rhythm. *The Gingerbread House*, by Neil Sharman, is very good visually, but would benefit from a re-working: the ending doesn't quite live up to the very promising beginning.

### Year 9

Rachel Mahoney's *Can you sweep the sand off the beach?* made me laugh out loud. The lineation is a bit suspect in places, but this is a really delightful poem - a strikingly original idea (!) and well achieved. The other prizewinners here are equally deserving: Tristan Holland's *Young* paints a moving portrait of an old man's feelings of isolation among young people; *Hamster Dreams*, by Matthew Langridge, is original and funny (I particularly like the ending) and Kate Ivy's *Thunder and Lightning* demonstrates

how a strong sense of atmosphere can be evoked very effectively with a few well-chosen words. Several other Year 9 poems came close to winning - Rachel Frances' *The Nose*, for instance, which begins, 'In cartoons/ I'm the thing/ That is most emphasized,' but which, unfortunately, doesn't quite manage to sustain itself to the end.

### Year 10

In general the most successful poems in this year-group were those that tried least hard to impress. First prize goes to Terence Haines for his humorous and detailed study of *The Fire Flower*, whose 'green faces crease with laughter,/ Their ears long and pink'. *Birth of a Dream* is an original idea and engages the reader's interest immediately with the opening lines, 'Gently, so as not to startle the sleeper,/ The mind opens to the universe' - although I'm not altogether convinced by the concept of 'cerebral loins' in the last line! Amy Walden's *Why?* is another light-hearted poem, with a gentle, uncomplicated rhythm, but with a serious point to make in the closing lines.

Several poems which might otherwise have won prizes in this year-group were spoiled by weak endings, and I found it difficult to decide on a winner for 4th place. In the end I settled on *Night's Goddess* which contains some good detail ('Frozen night,/ Chills leaf tips/ With a white glaze') and *Blossom*, which is simple and effective, has a good sense of movement, and manages to say something about the transience of beauty along the way.

### Year 11

Jennifer Dawe's excellent untitled poem (which begins, 'Note the flaking paint around the window,/ And the guttering that gave way to a frozen stream') is full of atmosphere, and is in many ways the most original poem in this year-group - both in concept and execution. However, it does contain weaknesses: I can't for the life of me work out, for instance, what 'A lucky find with a faulty switch' is referring to, in the final stanza. - An old electric fire perhaps? At any rate it is unclear. A poem - particularly a narrative poem - must be self-explanatory if it is to succeed, and it is for this reason that Jennifer's poem ended up in 4th place.

Rebecca Avery gets 1st place for her thought-provoking poem about the voyeuristic nature of newspaper photography. This sort of subject lends itself to hackneyed phrases and ideas, but Rebecca manages, for the most part, to avoid lapsing into cliché. The poem considers, simply and effectively, how the victims themselves might feel, and ends up questioning how ethical or useful such photographs really are.

Lisa Whitfield's straightforward plea for independence (in her poem of that name) has a pulsing, regular rhythm which is very effective in banging home the message that 'To you I may be just a child,/ I'm more than that to me', and *Full Moon*, by Steven Tudor, conveys the powerlessness and terror of a werewolf as he begins his transformation: 'For when a full moon glimmers,/ The pack runs thicker by one.'

Best wishes. Julia Copus.

## *Evening Dive*

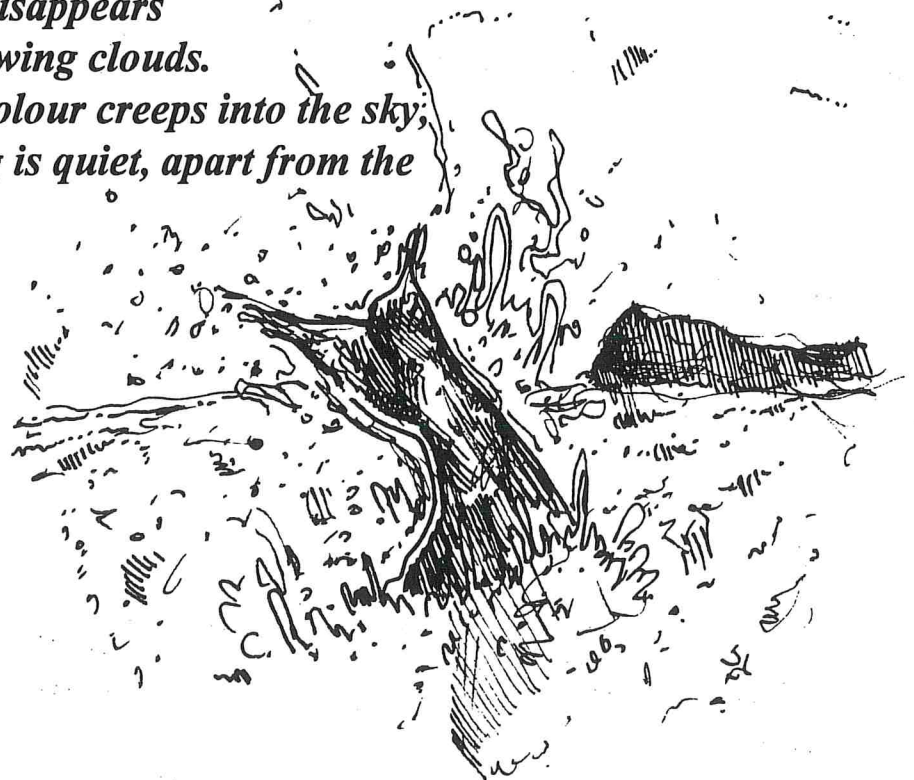
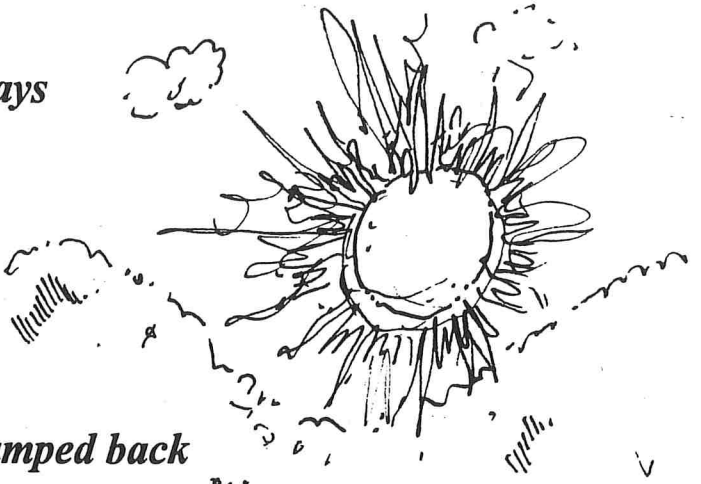
*As the sun flings its last rays  
Across the shining sea,  
The deep sea whale  
Prepares its evening dive.*

*First you see the nose,  
Glistening in the light,  
Then you see the great humped back  
Curved like a crescent moon.*

*Last of all comes the sweeping tail,  
Water flying off it, turning golden in the sun,  
Then all at once the crystal path in the water  
is clear again,  
And the deep sea whale is gone.*

*Then the sun disappears  
Behind the glowing clouds.  
The jet black colour creeps into the sky,  
And everything is quiet, apart from the  
restless sea.*

*Elinor Benton  
7DJ  
1st Prize*



## *Living in the Shadows*

*He lived beside the gutters,  
He smelled of the sewers,  
He ate in drains and was not clean,  
His clothing was the food of rats.*

*He fought the Government and cried aloud,  
"Tell them I am not afraid,  
Politician, I will fight until I die"!*

*The passers by frowned,  
And the people in the carts stared,  
The coaches came down the street and stopped,  
Around him, people's mouths dropped in horror.*

*By the roadside the man lay.  
Was he alive? Was he dead?  
The doctor was never summoned.*

*Old man how can we give you our respect?  
You lived your life in poverty.*

*They paid tribute, all in sorrow,  
Mist circled above the gravestones,  
A prayer rang out above mournful sobbing.*

*"We think of you old man  
For in the morning light you went out to fight  
But at eventide you did not return".*

*Michael Reader  
7LL  
2nd Prize*

## *The Tornado*

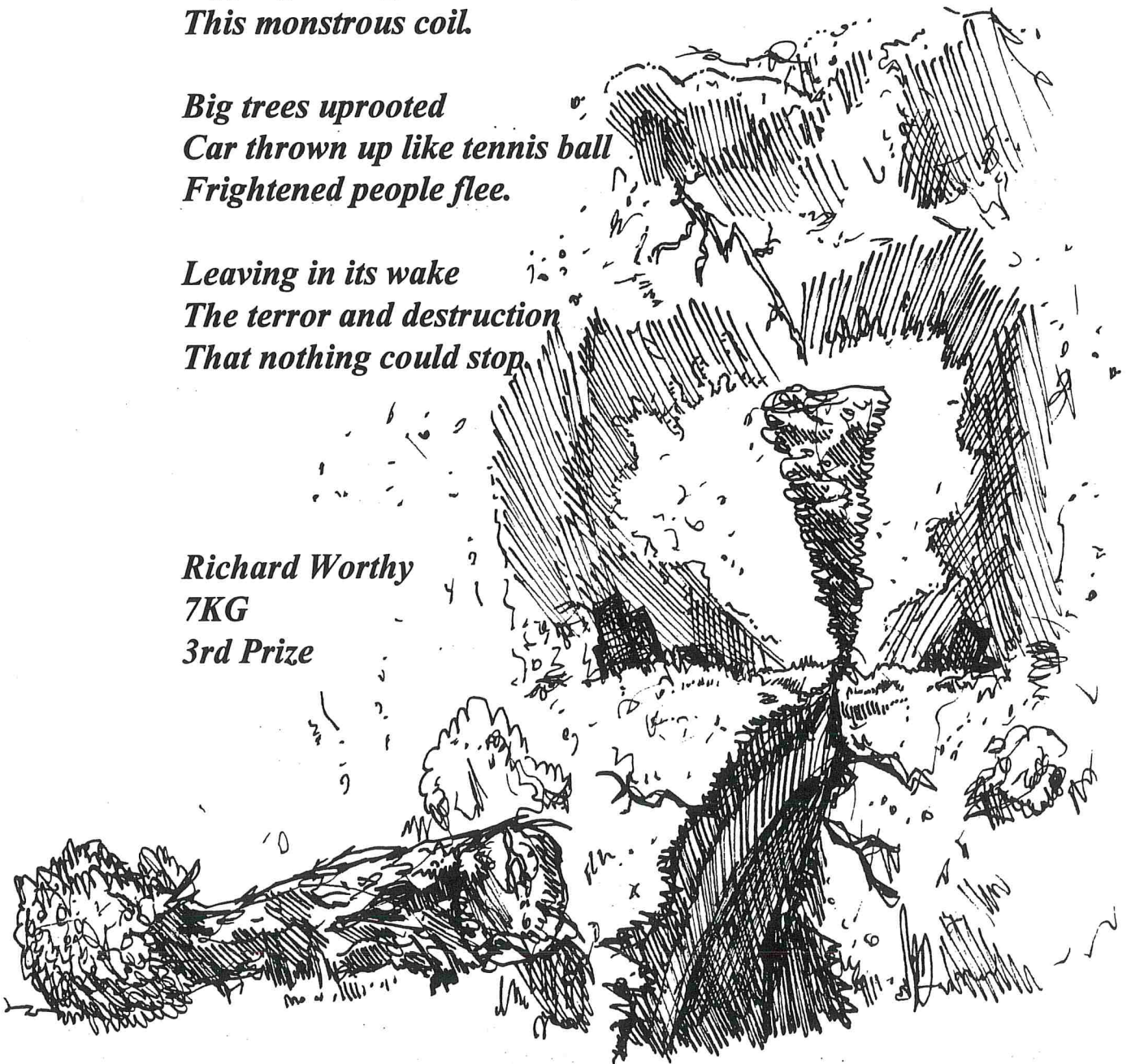
*A spiralling cone  
A destructive spinning top  
A cyclone of wind.*

*It tears up the land  
Ripping through the countryside  
This monstrous coil.*

*Big trees uprooted  
Car thrown up like tennis ball  
Frightened people flee.*

*Leaving in its wake  
The terror and destruction  
That nothing could stop.*

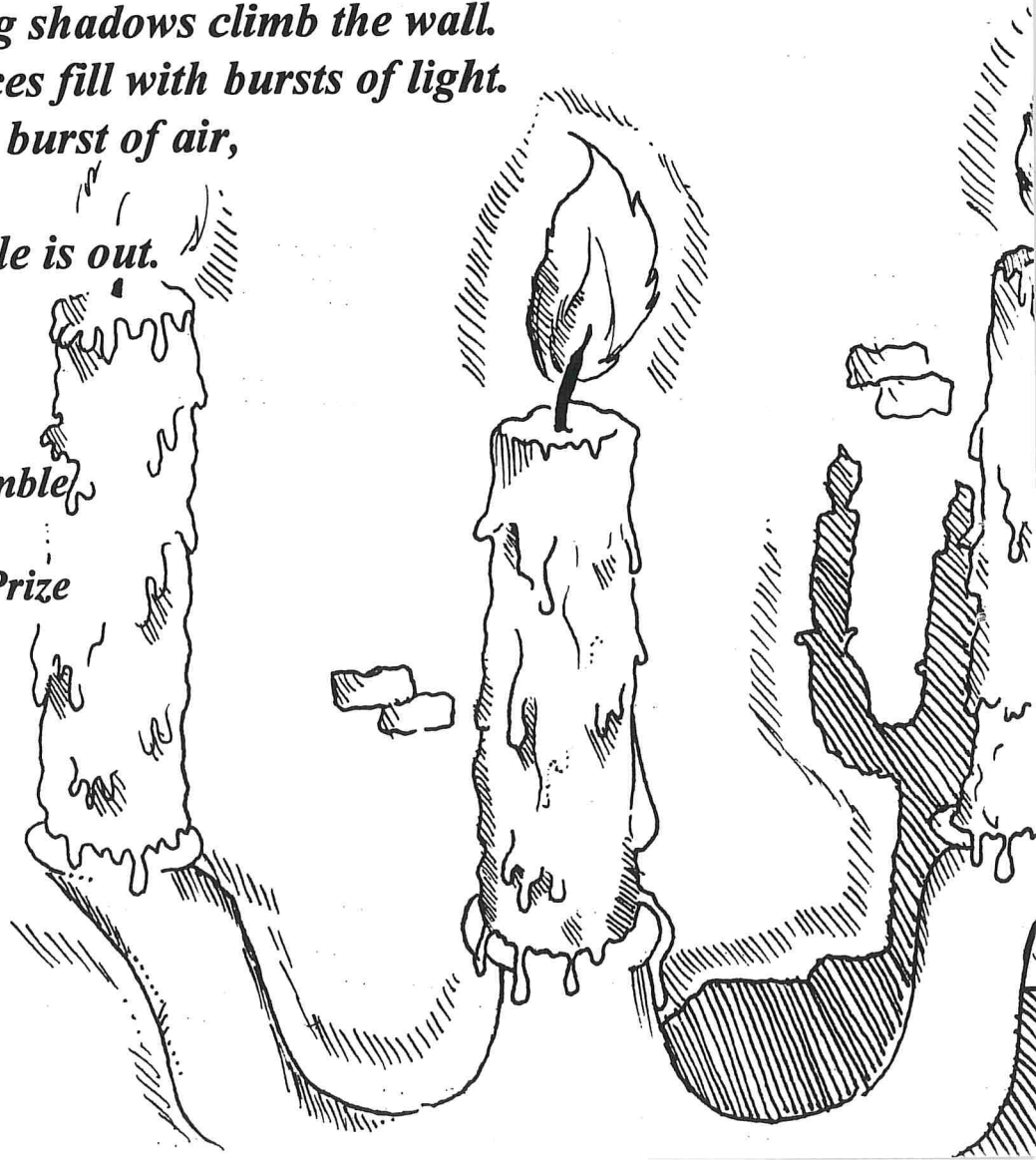
*Richard Worthy  
7KG  
3rd Prize*



## ***Candles***

***Melted wax,  
Overflowing,  
Trickles down the stem.  
Incense, gives off a powerful aroma.  
The hot orange flame lights up the room.  
Smooth, greasy, moulded wax.  
The wick crackles loudly.  
Flickering shadows climb the wall.  
Dark places fill with bursts of light.  
A sudden burst of air,  
Puff.  
The candle is out.***

***Laura Gamble  
7DD  
Joint 4th Prize***



***What is Grey?***

***Grey is a bird's eye view of an old people's home.  
It is the feel of difference and change.  
The disappearing bruise of your first fall.  
The vanishing mist floating into the never-ending  
sky.  
Grey is the rising of the hammer and the bash of  
the nail.  
It's your veins weaving in a never-ending maze.  
Grey is walking under a old dusty bridge.  
It is the condensation on the window.  
The softest of snow mixed with marks of feet.  
Grey is the catch of the day falling onto the  
harbour side.  
It's the elder's hands all bumpy and frail***

***Jenny Hurst***

***7KZ***

***Joint 4th Prize***

## *The Hunter*

*The hunter loads his gun  
Footsteps crunch on the crispy ground  
Grass is clutching at his high boots  
Moving closer not making a sound.*

*The hunter's thoughts are fixed and wary  
Upon the tiger that he sought  
In those dry arid grasses  
He only had one dreadful thought.*

*The wind picked up, the grasses shivered  
As though from fear of future pain  
They swayed and bowed to the hunter  
As he moved forward across the plain.*

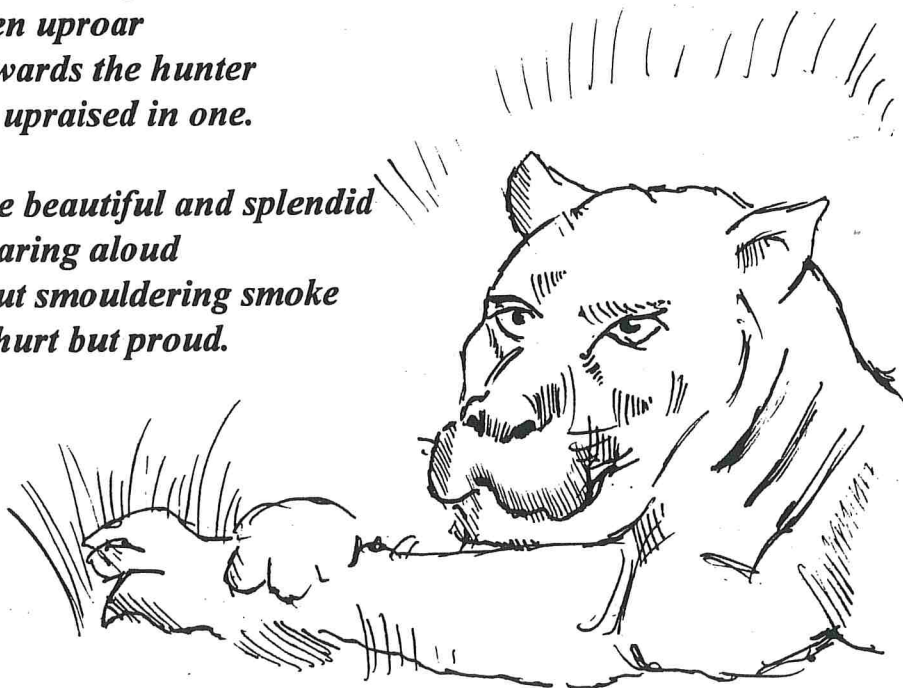
*At last he came upon the hunting ground  
Where the gun would silence the tiger's cry  
As he fought his last brave fight  
The brave battle to be immobilised to a sigh.*

*The bearers followed beating their drums  
Into the sky flew flapping their wings  
The sparrows shouting, screeching and screaming  
Circling and calling in airborne rings.*

*A flash of gold and black leapt out  
Startled by the sudden uproar  
Confused it came towards the hunter  
Who stood with gun upraised in one.*

*The massive creature beautiful and splendid  
Leapt into the air roaring aloud  
But the gun spoke out smouldering smoke  
The tiger crumpled hurt but proud.*

*Jessica Metzelaar  
7LT  
Commended*

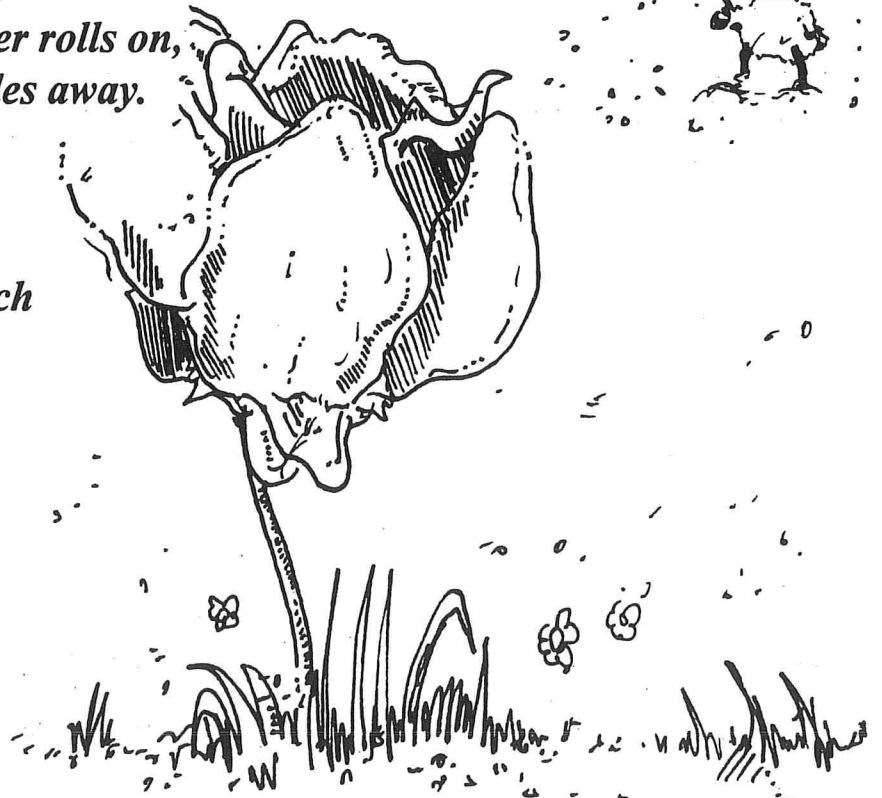


## *Spring*

*Busy bees buzz in the bright breeze,  
Tall trees travel upwards.  
A small daffodil,  
Watches the green grass grow,  
Petals slowly fall to the ground.  
A red rose opens,  
Like a doorway to life,  
Bright and warm like the sun.*

*A gentle lamb,  
Frolics about,  
Springing all over the meadow.  
Cherry blossom light and fluffy,  
Like a strawberry milkshake,  
Creamy and rich.  
Slowly the summer rolls on,  
As the Spring fades away.*

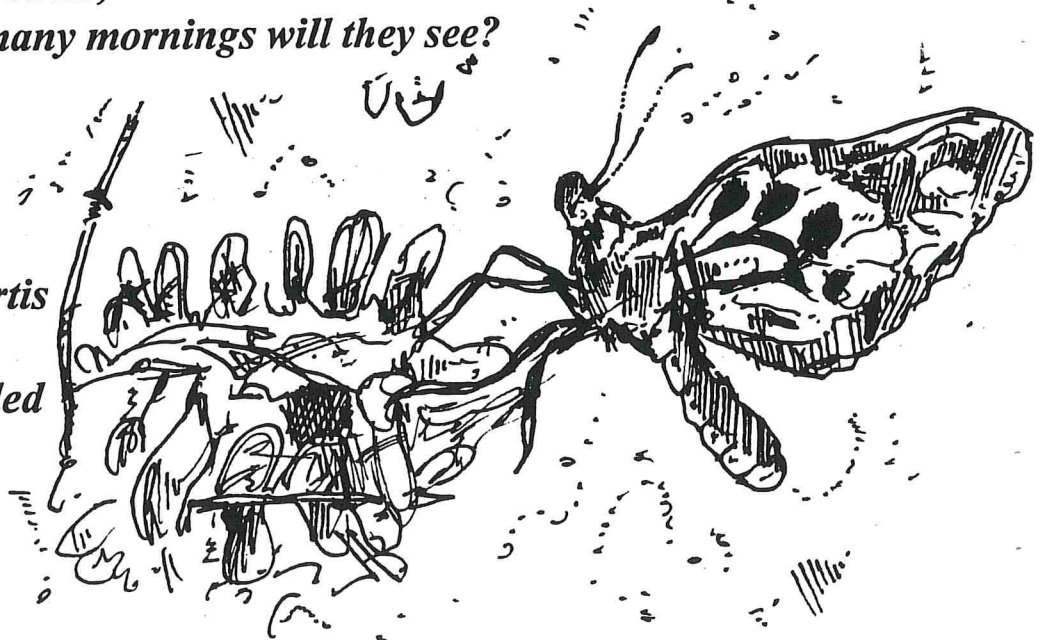
*Benjamin Harbach  
7KQ  
Commended*



## *The Day for A Butterfly*

*The crack of a brown shell.  
Free flies the butterfly the whole world to explore,  
It's bright colours shine in the morning sun,  
They fly over the leaves like a wind blown sweetwrapper,  
The colours of them change, one minute bright the next  
dull,  
Nightfall comes,  
But how many mornings will they see?*

*Jenny Curtis  
7DJ  
Commended*



## *The house of many murders*

*The night was silent and still  
Except for the hoot of an owl.  
And as I listened harder  
A dog began to howl.*

*I was sitting up in bed  
Any my body was shaking badly  
My eyes were wide with terror  
And I wanted to scream madly.*

*I turned my head around  
To have a look outside.  
My chest was heaving up and down  
My fear I could not hide.*

*What was that sound that had woken me?  
I was sure it had been a scream.  
A cry given in terror  
But, now, so silent it began to seem.*

*But I was sure I'd heard  
That cry in the night  
It must have been real;  
It had given me a fright.*

*Slowly, fearfully,  
I knew I should,  
I began to climb out of bed  
"Good".*

*I slowly crossed the room  
To look down to the ground,  
I reached the window,  
And looked around.*

*I saw two men, one  
was limp and still; dead?!?  
While the other dragged him off,  
By the head.*

*A murder! A murder!  
I thought to myself  
What could I do?  
I must stop him myself!*

*Even though I was scared  
I was determined I would,  
I zipped up my coat,  
And pulled on the hood.*

*So as not to wake my parents,  
I tiptoed downstairs,  
I wouldn't tell them,  
They'd be completely unawares.*

*Like a cat,  
I crept down the hall,  
But then I stopped,  
I was scared, I didn't want to go at all.*

*But how can a boy  
Stop a murderous man?  
It was no use,  
Even though I told myself I can.*

*For he'd be bound to catch me  
And murder me too.  
Or strangle me, or stab me,  
Or flush my head in the loo.*

*But wait! I didn't have to  
Try and stop him on my own!  
Find out about him,  
Then to phone the police I could come back home.*

*I looked first to see  
If my torch was in my pocket  
And checked to make sure I had  
My lucky golden locket.*

*My hand on the handle  
I opened the door  
But I didn't know that I would  
Not return there anymore.*

*I had soon reached a house  
After following him for an hour  
Suddenly, he looked round  
And I leapt in the bushes to cower.*

*Suspiciously he turned away  
And out of his jacket he took a key  
And dragged the body inside,  
He didn't know that I would see.*

*James Feist*

*7LT*

*Commended by W H Smith*

***Janet Jackson***

***Janet Jackson is like a sip of coke  
She's like a lexus, black with gold trimming  
A horse striding across a field  
A moving beanbag, all cuddly and nice  
Summer, really hot and long  
Commanding over all earth  
11:32.09 p.m. is her time of day  
A diamond sparkling in the night  
Flying gracefully through the clouds  
Glorious and sweet like a peach  
A birch swaying in the wind  
The taste of strawberries and cream  
Like America, all hot  
The Empire State Building, building of the State  
I would compare her to Ricki lake  
Beautiful but deadly, like a rose  
She would be the colour of the sun  
Beautiful and dazzling***

***Gagandeep Bedi***

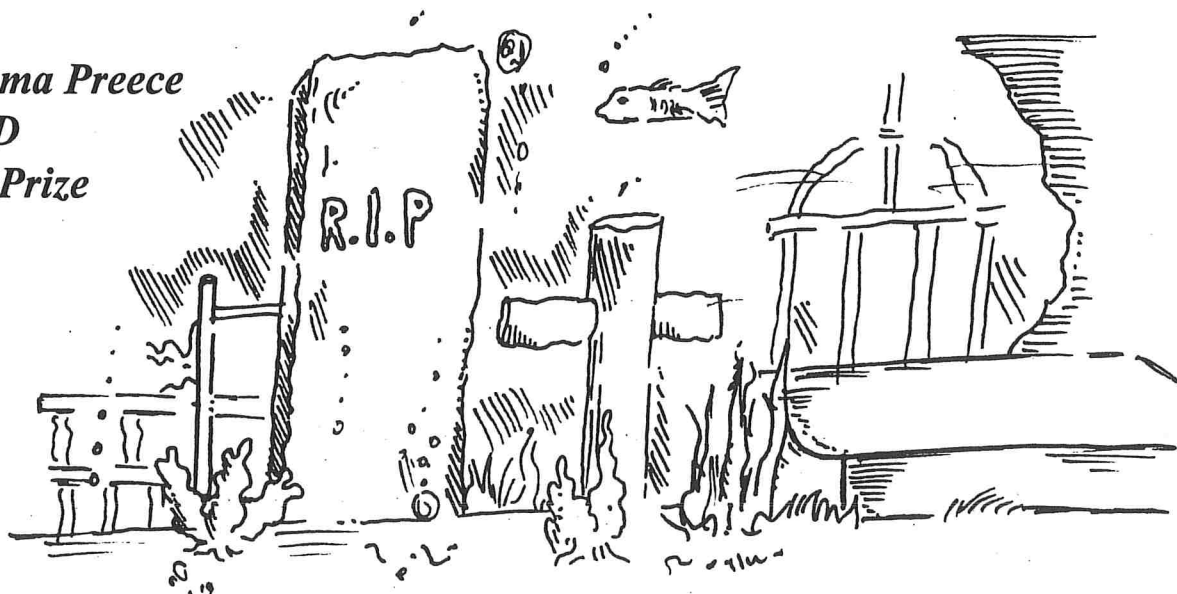
***TMQ***

***Commended by W H Smith***

## *An Ocean Graveyard*

*A city enveloped by a torrent of water,  
A graveyard in the ocean,  
With buildings for gravestones,  
And ruins for coffins,  
Fish, like floating, curving jewels,  
Sweep with early evening tide,  
Past fishing boats like mossy banks,  
Tied to coral covered poles,  
And furniture covered by shiny seaweed,  
Like oceanic dust.  
Wooden doors concealed by crazed limpets sway,  
On rusty hinges with the current.  
A pearl in the ocean,  
A jewel amongst the waves,  
With glistening, jewelled, sparkling walls,  
A city now only a memory,  
A cabinet now only driftwood with a protruding handle.*

*Emma Preece  
8DD  
1st Prize*



## *Anger*

*It is a jump,  
From bad to worse.  
It is a red patch,  
On a black background.  
It is a crooked line,  
On a blank face.  
It is a loud roar,  
From nowhere.  
It is a black darkness  
In an empty cave.  
It is a huge balloon,  
About to burst.  
It is a burnt hole,  
On white paper.  
It is a teacher,  
Giving detention.  
It is brothers,  
Having a fight.  
It is a pepper,  
Red and Hot.  
It is a planet,  
Of burning gas.  
It is a vase,  
Knocked off a shelf.  
It is a fire,  
Burning and roaring vigorously.*

*David Reeves*

*8KQ*

*2nd Prize*

## ***Egg Curry***

***Chop up an onion, then fry in some oil,  
Pour in the tomatoes and bring to the boil,  
Paprika, Turmeric, sprinkle in spices,  
Peel the potatoes, and cut into slices,  
Add water and peas, then give it a stir,  
You can also use sweetcorn, if you prefer,  
Shell hard boiled eggs, and lightly chop,  
Add to the pan, put the lid on the top,  
Simmer quite gently, stir once or twice,  
Meanwhile prepare, hot spicy pilau rice,  
Serve on a thali with sweet mango pickle,  
Garnish with salad, your taste buds to tickle!***

***Rebecca Jethwa***

***8WW***

***Joint 3rd Prize***

## ***Nothingness***

***Nothingness is clear and hanging in mid air.***

***Nothingness is that place in between here and there.***

***Nothingness is a night without any dreams.***

***Nothingness is never what it is or what it seems.***

***Nothingness is what the world is flying through.***

***Nothingness is the space between this page and you.***

***Natalie Jupp***

***8DJ***

***Joint 3rd Prize***

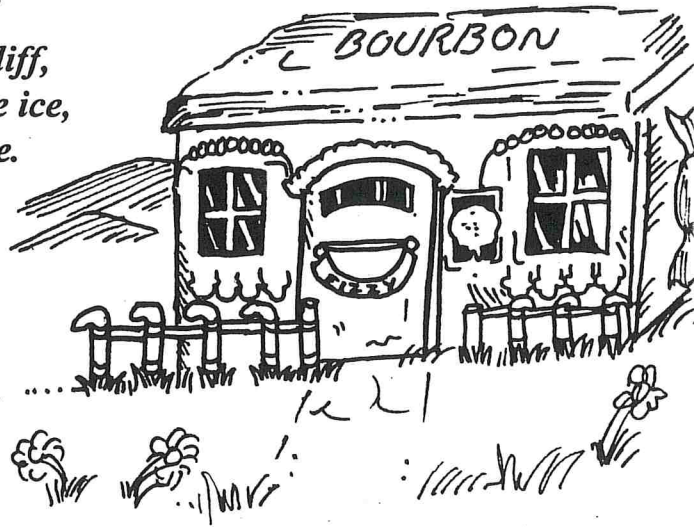
## *The Gingerbread House*

*We advanced on that steep rocky cliff,  
The Fulmer birds had found good haunts on ledges.  
The crags of the cliff were worn away by the winter  
Water and wind.*

*The cliff side flowers add a multitude of golden  
Colour to the white misused cliff.  
The boat rocks in the cold sea wind.*

*Steep steps were cut in the craggy cliff,  
We climbed and slipped on rock like ice,  
We, compared to the cliff, were mice.*

*The house stood at the very top,  
The stone, a gleam of gingerbread,  
A fence made of candy,  
Roof, a brown bourbon.*



*The doorbell, a sugar doughnut,  
A knocker, a fizzy chew bar,  
We ate too our hearts' content,  
Till we were bursting like a frozen pipe.*

*The old lady told us to come,  
She stood with an arched back  
Her warts were bursting like a river when flooded.*

*Her eyes were frozen blue,  
Her ears the shape of curly pasta,  
Her mouth, crisp and twisted.  
Her hair a dark brown.*



*We stood in that warm kitchen  
Pondering on what to say,  
The lady gave us good day by day.*

*The lady said to us, "What big chops we have".  
We took no notice of this old, frail lady  
Until at last she chucked us in with the cold Sunday gravy!*

*Neil Sharman  
8DY  
4th Prize*

***What are ..... the Stars?***

***The stars are little fireflies millions of miles away.***

***They are spirits of famous warriors.***

***They are God's light left on at dark.***

***They are the hole in the night sky***

***Where the hidden sun shines through.***

***They are God's magic dust sprinkled on the world.***

***Emma Crowder***

***8DD***

***Commended***

## *Languages*

*Languages are things  
That start off small  
A little squeak  
That is all*

*A little squeak  
Spoken  
With a little tongue  
A hesitant sound  
On the mouthless planet.*

*Across and down  
On the other hemisphere  
there is  
A shy Reply*

*As I turn my head  
Eastwards  
A murmur uncurls*

*Three once-mute voices  
Sing  
Two more  
From the left  
Deep and dark  
Mutter.*

*An echo comes  
Loud and clear  
From the north.*

*A confused knot  
Of verbal jibber-jabber  
Erupts from  
A crowd.*

*On the mouthless planet  
a conversation  
Starts.*

*Emily Pavey  
8KG  
Commended*

***Can you Sweep the Sand off a Beach?***

***Can you sweep the sand off a beach?***

***I really want to know.***

***Can you sweep the sand off a beach?***

***Please tell me if so.***

***I think it's totally impossible, it can't be possible at all.***

***So I'll push the thought out of my mind and leave it all behind.***

***But again I thought***

***Can you really sweep the sand off the sandy beach?***

***There is so much sand***

***There's nowhere to sweep it***

***And if you did where would you keep it?***

***The sand that you'd swept off the beach***

***It would take you two long months more***

***Like a year, so are you going to go for a***

***Sand sweeping career?***

***Rachel Mahoney***

***9LF***

***1st Prize***

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## *Young*

*The orange light peeps through the crack in the curtains  
I look away  
The chiming noise I'm not so used to  
Strikes six  
People moving shift from place to place  
I can't recognise anyone's face  
As noises bang and clang and ring  
I can't hear anything through the din  
The smell of roast chestnuts whiffs across the square  
I come to the restaurant and pull up a chair  
People giggle, laugh and have fun  
Why can't I be like them  
Why can't I be young*

*Tristan Holland*

*9WH*

*2nd Prize*

## *Hamster Dreams*

*My hamster thinks he's Dracula,  
He comes out every night.  
He zooms around my bedroom,  
Looking for a bite.*

*He also thinks he's Tarzan,  
He swings from bar to bar.  
He could be King of the Jungle,  
But he's much too small by far.*

*He also pretends he's Elvis,  
He sings with a little guitar.  
The only thing about that,  
Is, he'll never make a star.*

*He also likes some sunflower seeds,  
He eats an awful lot.  
He stores them in his pouches  
Then drops them in his pot.*

*He also has a rolling ball,  
He goes so very fast.  
If he entered the Olympic games,  
He'd never turn up last.*

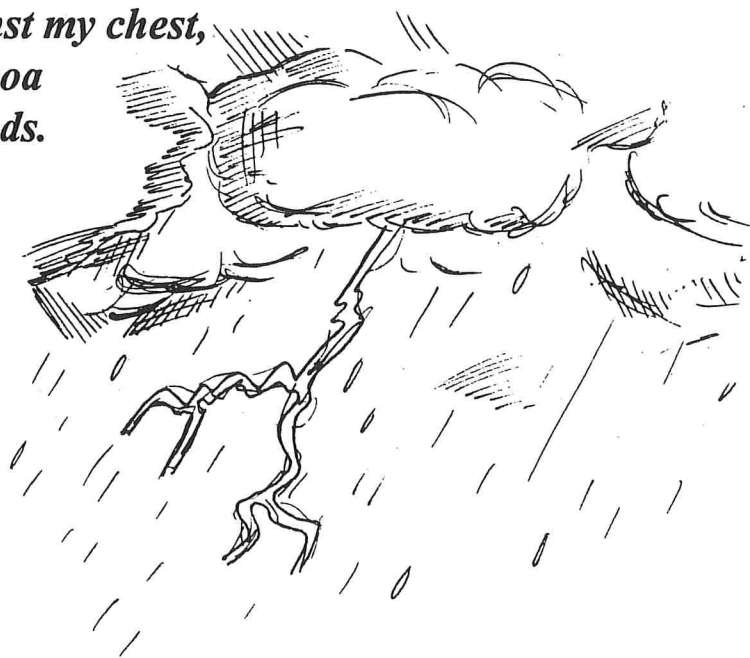


*Matthew Langridge  
9KG  
3rd Prize*

## *Thunder and Lightning*

*I see the great fork lightning,  
Like graffiti across the sky.  
A few minutes silence,  
Then I hear that noise,  
A noise like a hungry elephants stomach  
Rumbling in the night.  
I sit in my cosy room  
With my knees against my chest,  
And a hot cup of cocoa  
Warming up my hands.*

*Kate Skelton  
9WK  
4th Prize*



## *The Price of War*

*Great buildings destroyed, like paper they crumble,  
Falling like mountains to piles of dust;  
Monuments of man, reduced to nothing,  
Concrete to rubble and iron to rust.  
Rivers run thick with the blood of the dead,  
Naive as children, believing the lies.  
Fields of bodies turned deep, deep red,  
Scores of innocents who gave up their lives.*

*Destruction and death, chaos and rain;  
Those are the certainties of war, nothing else.  
Let no one tell you of glory and wealth,  
There is so much to pay for so little gain.  
Victory they promise but at what price?  
Separation, suffering, mass loss of life.*

*Ailsa Bown*

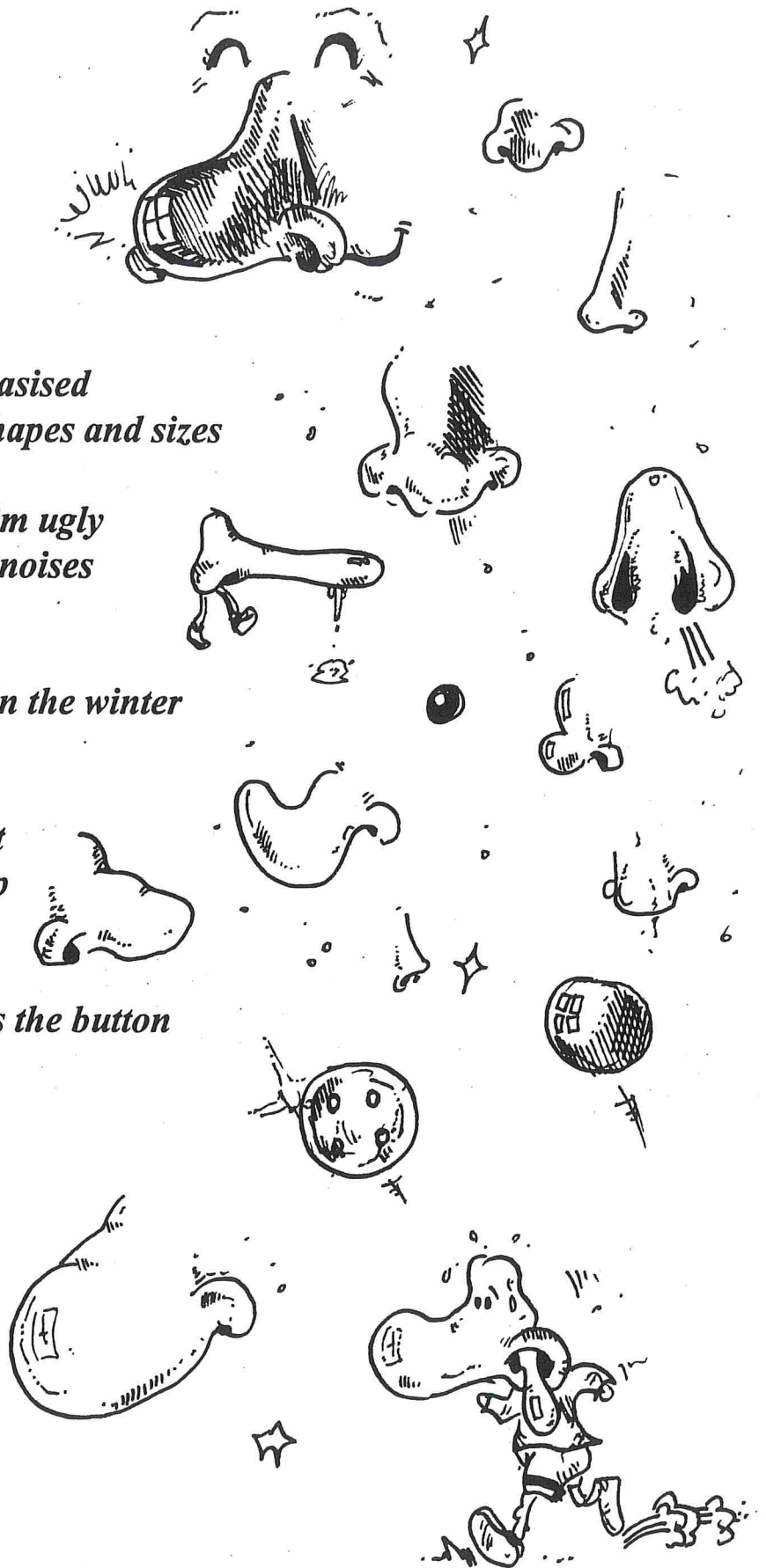
*9KQ*

*Commended*

## *The Nose*

*In cartoons  
I'm the thing  
That is most emphasised  
I come in lots of shapes and sizes  
Nobody likes me  
Everyone thinks I'm ugly  
I can make lots of noises  
Some I like  
Some I don't  
I sometimes glow in the winter  
When it's cold  
Sometimes I run  
But I usually don't  
I can be a ski-jump  
I can be pointed  
I can be squashed  
But my favourite is the button  
And that's me!!*

*Rachel Collins  
9WK  
Commended*



## *The Sycamore Seed*

*A helicopter landed in my garden today  
It was green brown small and light  
A helicopter on it's first flight  
The propellers were whirling  
The seed was swirling  
As it drifted into my garden today*

*David House  
9LL  
Commended*

## *The Tortoise*

*The tortoise walks like a slow elephant.  
One foot in front of the other.  
Every step is exactly marked.  
He pushes and moves very slowly.*

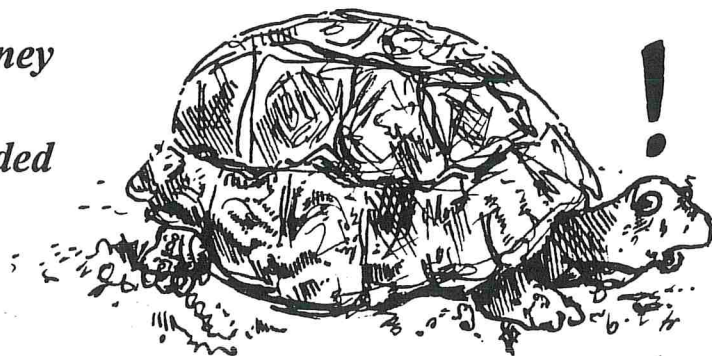
*The shell is smooth in every nook and cranny.  
With scales mistaken for a smooth pebble.  
Shiny with a hard sparkle.  
It is tough like a brick.*

*The colour of this tortoise,  
Is green with a dot of brown.  
Could be mistaken for a helmet in World War II.  
Or maybe a hand grenade.*

*He eats like a Human with no arms.  
Mouth comes out and snaps.  
He then treads on his food and pulls.  
Give him a minute; it will all be gone.*

*The tortoise, confronted by a foot.  
Head goes in. All visible life is gone.  
In a minute later head comes out.  
The tortoise is a winner (well that's what he thinks).*

*Alex Gosney  
9LF  
Commended*



## *The Fire Flower*

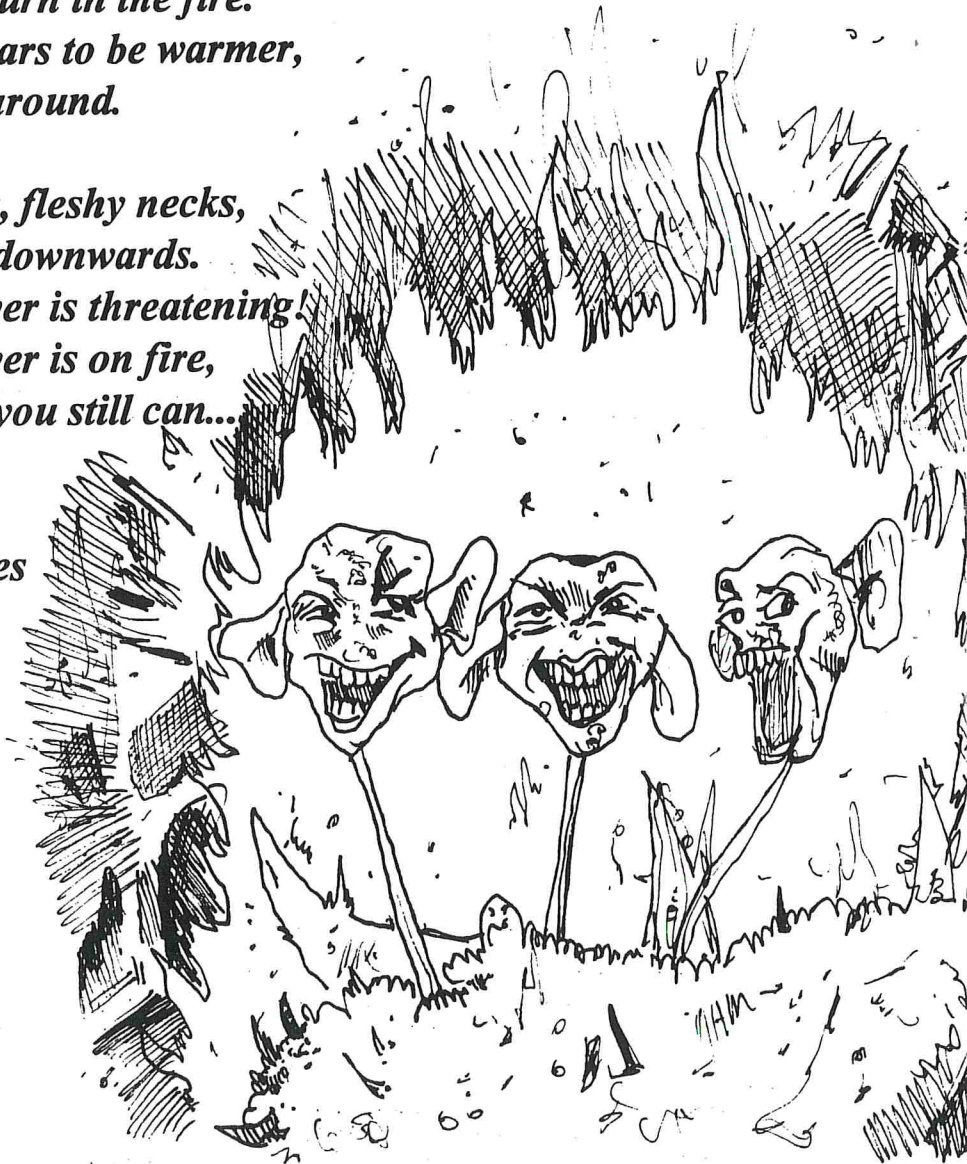
*From within the spiked bush,  
Shooting up high on their necks.  
Three heads can be seen laughing,  
Planning their evil scheme.*

*The green faces crease with laughter,  
Their ears long and pink.  
Danger written all over them,  
The Fire Flower's in town.*

*The banana shaped spikes explode,  
Colours that burn in the fire.  
The area appears to be warmer,  
Danger is all around.*

*From the long, fleshy necks,  
Upwards and downwards.  
The Fire Flower is threatening!  
The Fire Flower is on fire,  
Run — while you still can...*

*Terence Haines  
10DD  
1st Prize*



## ***Birth of a Dream***

***Gently, so as not to startle the sleeper,  
The mind opens to the universe.  
Infinity prompts the imagination  
Hallucinations from the subconscious  
Become temporarily tangible.  
Deprived of visual data  
The brain activates the minds eye  
Stored images of reality  
Merge with fabulous ideas.  
The fantastic and the prosaic  
Combine to produce a virtual experience,  
A dream, the fruit of cerebral loins.***

***Thomas Rapley  
10DD  
2nd Prize***

*Why?*

*Why does toast always fall butterside down?*

*Why does the Queen wear a crown?*

*Why are there no words in mime?*

*Why does lemon go with lime?*

*Why did our parents like wearing flares*

*Why do people stop and stare*

*at a car crash on the side of the road?*

*Why is a frog different from a toad?*

*Why do new born babies cry?*

*Why do people always try*

*to be something they're not*

*to impress someone they like a lot?*

*Why do people seek the key to eternal life?*

*It can all be ended with one blow of a knife.*

*Why are we cutting down the trees,*

*When it's them who let us breathe?*

*Why are a few abstract shapes called art?*

*Why does death have to tear us apart*

*from the ones we love?*

*Why does a dove*

*Symbolise peace*

*when there is none?*

*Amy Walden*

*10WK*

*3rd Prize*



***Blossom***

***It is snowy white and silky  
The virgin petals creamy and untouched  
Handfuls hanging off every branch  
Then, just a whisper of the wind  
And it is transformed:  
Confetti.***

***Downwards, groundwards it falls  
Thousands of inflourescent flakes  
To rest delicately upon the grass  
Or to float upon the lake  
Or to be crushed by human feet  
Trampled and disfigured.***

***Michael Crisp  
10WK  
Joint 4th Prize***

## *Night's Goddess*

*Winter Moon,  
Shining pool of light,  
White and cold,  
Floats in a navy sky.  
Shrill cries  
Echo in an empty night.  
Shining white orb  
Casts long shadows.  
Frozen night,  
Chills leaf tips  
With a white glaze.  
Night's cloak,  
Covering naked trees,  
Floats peacefully on its way.*

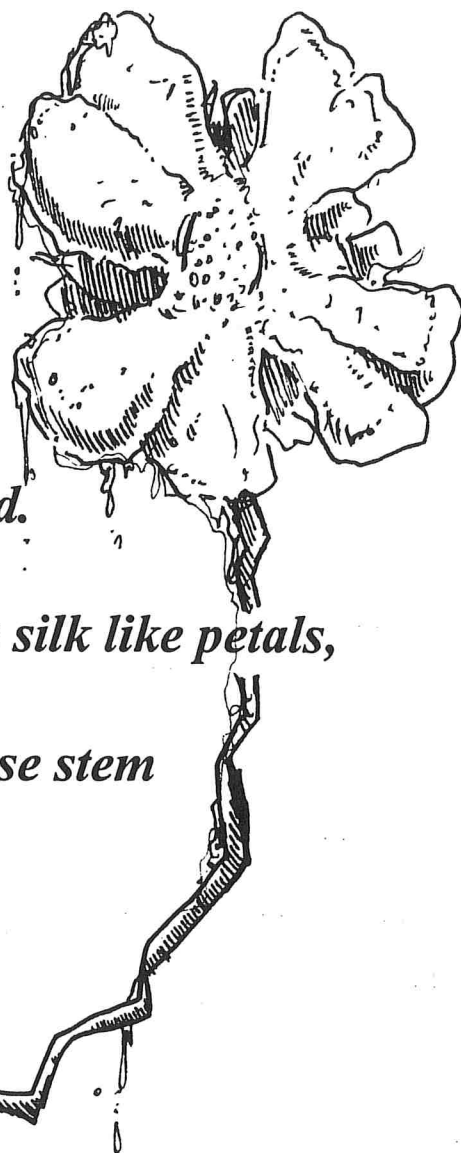


*Amanda Weeks  
10DJ  
Joint 4th Prize*

## *The Flower*

*Rough Stems  
rub the gentle petals  
in the light tender breeze.  
A small drop of dew falls  
from the tree above  
and is caught  
on the elegant pink petal.*

*It sits on the petal  
without a care in the world.  
When the breeze picks up  
it rolls smoothly along the silk like petals,  
to where it drips  
on to the rough hard coarse stem  
where it is followed,  
by a thousand others.*



*Paul Nelson  
10DJ  
Commended*

## *Four seasons of love*

*When I look at her, the four seasons collide.  
Love blooms like the flowers of spring,  
She's looking hot as the summer comes,  
Her beauty is equal to the colours of autumn,  
But winter has frozen her heart.*

*She does not really have a cold heart,  
It is not her fault I have fallen in love,  
It is not her fault she does not feel this way,  
But it still hurts to look at this girl who,  
Has broken my heart in two.*

*Richard Lewis  
10WW  
Commended*

## *Journey*

*Fog, and rain onto the ground  
Marsh, water moving slowly  
into a rivulet, faster now over rocks.  
Joining others, a stream  
Carved from millions of years.  
Straight, and fast on downwards.  
Now a river where people fish,  
And slower, more tame,  
Deep and mysterious.  
Slowly, taking its time.  
Not knowing its age.  
Sluggishly twisting and turning,  
Feeling it's near its place;  
Then, at last reaching the sea  
and sleeping, lost forever  
Washing against the shores of eternity*

*John Saxton  
10DY  
Commended*

## *The Fighting Peacock*

*Turning the corner it came into view,  
Like a proud peacock in the distance  
In midnight green and gold.  
It drew me in.*

*Intrigued I took a closer look,  
Those floppy leaves on mass.  
Soft green underneath,  
Dark and shiny on top.*

*Woody stalks - tall and spindly,  
How did they take the weight of the flowers?  
Brown brittle dry stalks,  
Why didn't they snap?*

*And from those proud peacock feathers,  
Orange and golden brown eyes,  
Flaming flowers,  
Breathing colour into the scene.*

*As the wind picked up,  
The feathers rattled.  
The peacock displayed its beauty and it's might,  
Frightening off those tempted to pick it's crop.*

*George Suckling  
10LF  
Commended*

***DAD!***

***You once were my dad  
But we had to part  
I don't know where you are  
But you're still in my heart.***

***You took us on holiday  
for good or for bad  
The times we shared  
Were happy, not sad.***

***I hear of your presence  
The place you might work  
Where you might live  
And the places you lurk!***

***You left leaving me  
with things to learn  
I thought you'd come back  
but you never returned.***

***No hello's, no letters  
Nothing seems true  
Just one goodbye that said  
"I'll miss you"***

***Naomi Holdstock  
10WW  
Commended***

## *THE WIND*

*The wind whispers over the hills,  
Brushing briskly past the grass,  
Roughly rushing through the trees,  
Running blindly past the world,  
Never caring,  
Never wearing.*

*It flies too fast to be seen,  
But lingers long enough to feel like  
the steely sting it leaves on your face,  
The watery way it leaves your eyes,  
Then suddenly it is gone,  
But not for long.*

*It starts off bashful like a breeze,  
But soon becomes a gallant gale,  
It weaves its wild and windy way,  
As it sweeps and swirls,  
Always moving,  
Always eager.*

*The trees stand straight and stubborn,  
Until the winding wind takes hold,  
and firmly forces them down,  
until they are proud no more,  
No shame is shown,  
For the wind has flown.*

*The sun slowly fades,  
The mystical moon arises,  
But the wind is far from done,  
Nights curtains slowly shut,  
As the day closes its eyes,  
The wind still makes its wild way.*

*Rachel Hurst*

*10 KG*

*Commended by W H Smith*

*They say a picture tells a story,  
Even paints a thousand words,  
How powerful those words must be,  
To tell a tale we haven't heard.*

*How every stroke must make a difference,  
How every line must play a part,  
in helping us to understand  
A story that can touch the heart.*

*A picture of disease or famine,  
A picture of three soldiers, killed  
A picture made to pull our heartstrings,  
With sympathy our hearts are filled.*

*But does provoking tears, so maudlin,  
Help the victims of disease,  
Or are photographers just desperate  
To see their bosses really pleased?*

*We can see beyond the picture,  
To anger in the victim's eyes,  
Anger, the camera almost misses,  
The camera that so often lies.*

*Rebecca Clare  
11LT  
1st Prize*

## *Independence*

*Please don't treat me like a child,  
I've grown up lots since then,  
No-more will I hold your hand  
Or follow you again.*

*All those times you held me back,  
Imprisoned me at home,  
All the time you spent with me,  
You did not see I'd grown.*

*Don't wrap me up in cotton wool,  
Don't make me dresses to wear,  
Don't call me poppet or sweetheart,  
Or buy bobbles for my hair.*

*To you I may be just a child  
I'm more than that to me,  
Accept me, please, for who I am  
Not what you think you see.*

*Let me do what I need to do,  
My neck is in a noose,  
Let me say what I want to say,  
Just please, let me break loose.*

*Lisa Whitfield  
11KG  
2nd Prize*

## *Full Moon*

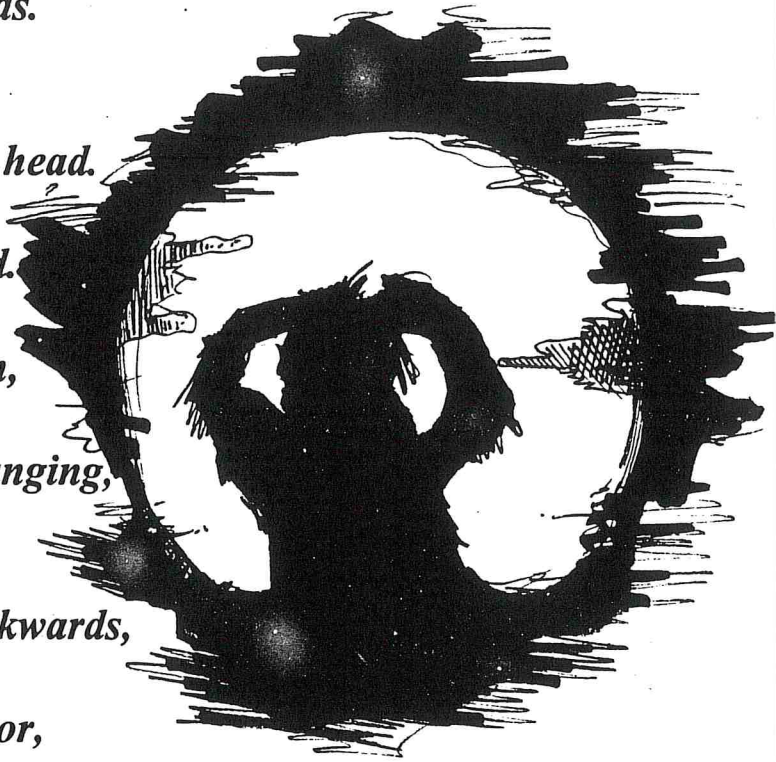
*The full and glowing moon's light,  
Bathes the travelling man.  
As he begins to scratch,  
The long hairs on his hands.*

*He falls upon his knees,  
With the pain that fills his head.  
Already he feels sorrow,  
For those who will be dead.*

*His face contorts with pain,  
As terror takes a grip.  
Then he feels his body changing,  
His clothes begin to rip.*

*His snarling head tilts backwards,  
He lets out a painful cry.  
And looks in hate and terror,  
At the pale globe in the sky.*

*For when a full moon glimmers,  
The pack runs thicker by one.  
But this strange and different creature,  
Is a decent humans son.*



*Steven Tudor  
11DD  
3rd Prize*

*Note the flaking paint around the window,  
And the guttering that gave way to a frozen stream,  
This is the house where the door could not open  
and the letterbox was permanently ajar.*

*One room is touched with a note of irony -  
A ray of sunlight where the cloth had fallen.  
Dusty shelves, a dead geranium -  
Unmoved by the cold gentle breeze that whistled through a  
broken pane.*

*The clean square of wallpaper where a loved one once was  
placed,  
The newspaper clippings allowing no light to fall on the floor  
The room seems abandoned but for a bag of vital possessions  
and a purse stuffed with notes*

*A chair has been placed in the warmest place,  
A lucky find with a faulty switch.  
Cold silence -  
and a 'missing' body slumped cold on the floor.*

*Jennifer Dawe  
11LT  
4th Prize*



## *Colours of Love*

*A pang of jealousy,  
Rips through my heart,  
It is green,  
Like your eyes.*

*You are with him,  
I am crying,  
Tears,  
Blue tears.*

*Our love was once burning,  
Like a fire,  
Red,  
Like your hair.*

*The sky is black,  
It is churning,  
Black,  
Like the death of him.*

*The dove white,  
Flies free,  
Like our love, used to be.  
White is surrender,  
I surrender,  
So you can be free.*

*Gareth Aspinall  
11LL  
Commended*

*Walk upon my grave when I am gone,  
And it should warm, and swell,  
As did my heart  
When our eyes met.*

*Don't be as those who came and wept,  
But bask in the love I gave.  
I am looking down,  
On you, my love.*

*Don't mourn our past.  
But look to the time,  
That you and I will reunite  
Together, in our place beyond the stars.*

*Helen Meader  
11KQ  
Commended*

## *An Apology*

*You are draining my life.  
I am falling -  
So fast, so far, so frightening.*

*You are everything.  
I don't exist.  
Please help me.*

*My brain is full of you  
And my heart - well, you know.  
My smile has shaped.  
A smile you never could see.*

*I was going to say  
I would do anything for you,  
But that's a lie.  
I wouldn't stop this feeling,  
I wouldn't even try.*

*You make me ache,  
You make me angry,  
But I don't mind.  
I never minded.*

*I'm burning and I am sorry  
I know, if you knew,  
you would hate this*

*I know you would hate it,  
And I hate that,  
But I don't know how to stop  
I'm sorry.*

*If only you saw - but you don't.  
Without you I can't even cry.  
Love is a terminal illness,  
But I'm not ready to die.*

*Hester Chillingworth  
11DJ  
Commended*

## *Father and Son*

*Every morning, until the age of ten,  
I could be found in the bathroom,  
Perched on the side of the bath,  
Watching my father.  
He would stand there, strong and muscular,  
His broad shoulders and arms huggable,  
His smiling face loveable.  
He would fill the sink with steamy hot water,  
A ball of white foam would be ready in one hand,  
A sharp steel razor in the other.*

*With a beard of foam,  
My father would draw the razor down his face  
Removing all traces of white.  
The zipping sound was almost musical.  
Gradually his tired, bearded face,  
Came up like new.  
He would wipe his face,  
Then splash on some cologne.  
The spicy scent would fill the room.  
Then he would turn to me,  
Smile, and spray me with the sweet fragrance.*

*Occasionally he would cut his face,  
I would tear the tissue paper for each new cut.  
My job and I was proud of it.  
Hand in hand we would leave the bathroom.*

*We were so close then,  
My father and I.*

*Nicola Pollard  
11KZ  
Commended by W H Smith*



