

The Terrible Fate of Humpty Dumpty

When a new boy, Terry, joins SAMMY's school, he is immediately bullied and intimidated by the gang leader Stubbs. Terry desperately wants to be accepted by the other boys and will do anything to please Stubbs. Although Sammy tries to befriend Terry, he keeps quiet when Stubbs expects Terry to complete a dangerous dare which eventually leads to his death. In this scene, after the terrible event, Sammy is trying to tell the police what actually happened.

SAMMY: I'm sorry... I tried to help but... I'm sorry...

(He faces the audience, and says)

... We killed him!

(The police officers move into the background)

It was an accident. Sort of. Nobody wanted it to happen. Except Stubbs, perhaps. I wouldn't put anything past Stubbs. He's mad, Stubbs is. Round the bend. It was him who started it all. Started having a go at Terry. I don't know why. He just decided he had it in for him. He'd only been at school for about a week. He was in my class. I'd spoken to him a few times. He seemed all right. A bit quiet, a bit shy. But he was all right. Then Stubbs decided to have it in for him. Nobody knows why. Nobody knows how Stubbs' mind works.

(A pause)

I'm trying to remember!...

(A pause. Then he continues)

... It was about a week after he started at school. We was in the playground talking together. And Stubbs and some of the others came up. I said, they're all right, really. Just having a joke. They like to have a joke. You'll get used to them. It's 'cos you're new. Once you've settled in they won't bother you no more...

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Terry didn't believe me. He knew they wouldn't leave him alone. I knew it, too. I could tell. Stubbs had it in for him from then on. And the others just followed Stubbs. Me too, I suppose. There was something about Terry. I don't know what it was. Something that made you want to have a go at him. He never stood up for himself. He just stood there and took it.

That's how it went. Every day. Week after week. Just getting on to him, making him bring money, waiting for him after school. They never beat him up or anything. They didn't need to. He did everything they said. I wish he'd have stood up to them just once. That would have been better than giving in all the time. Stubbs got to hate him more and more. Because he took it. He couldn't understand him, you see. He couldn't understand why he just took it all the time.

I know I should've done something. I should've told somebody, tried to get it stopped. They was my mates, though. You can't tell on your mates, can you?

(A pause. Then SAMMY says)

... It was Stubbs. He was the one. I was scared of Stubbs. Everybody was. It was like he was... I dunno... just bad... right the way through. He made everybody act like him. You couldn't help it. It was Stubbs.

I didn't tell anybody. *(A pause)* He stayed away from school. The whole of that week. They didn't seem bothered about it. They never even talked about him. It was like they'd forgotten all about him. I thought perhaps they had. So I decided to go round to his house and tell him that everything was all right again, and he could start coming back to school. I never got the chance. The day I was gonna do that, Terry's Dad came up to school. And Stubbs saw his Dad. That's when it all started again.

Stubbs told Terry he would have to take a little test. He wanted everybody to be at the waste ground after school.

(There is a pause)

I told him to go home. I said, go home, Terry. Don't wait round here. You've still got time. Are you round the bend? You know what's gonna happen, don't you? Stubbs is gonna get you. I heard Jimmy say. They're gonna get you.

I told him to go. Before it's too late. But it was too late. Pete threw the frisbee and it got stuck in the pylon. Stubbs made Terry climb up for it. They all made him, chanting "Humpty Dumpty" over and over and over again. I begged him to come down...

I'm sorry, Terry. I let you down. I tried, but it wasn't good enough. I'm sorry...

(A pause. Then SAMMY says)

Forgive me. Forgive us all.

(The lights fade slowly to black-out)

by David Calcutt