

Me, The Bully

Life had been great, till 'that day'. I was the eldest in a family of five children. My parents didn't have much money, but we were always clean and more important happy.

'That day' was 17th July 1973, 'That day' my dad was going to go to B&Q on his way home from work to buy paint. The paint was for our bedroom, the one us three girls slept in. We had chosen the colour from a chart that dad had brought home the previous week, 'Miss Piggy Pink'. We were so excited, we couldn't wait. We all stood by the window to waiting and watching for him to come home.

But dad never brought the paint home 'that day', dad never even brought himself home 'that day'. Dad never came home ever again after 'that day'.

The funeral came and went, everyone was miserable, mum couldn't stop crying.

I got used to mum's continuing crying, it was just the way she was. What I really missed was the lovely smile she used to have.

I wanted to help her get her smile back again, but I didn't know what to do. I missed my dad, we all missed dad. We missed mum too, the mum we used to have. We missed being clean and happy.

On the Monday before mother's day, Bridget brought into school the expensive present she had bought at the weekend for her mum. It was a lovely ornament.

A feeling came over me that I had never had before. I didn't realize what it was, now I understand that it was jealousy. The jealousy helped me to think of a brilliant way that I might be able to cheer mum a little.

That is the reason I stole Bridget's present! Well, I didn't exactly steal it, I didn't mean to keep, I just took it and hid it in my pocket. At the end of the day when Bridget came to collect her prized present from her desk it wasn't there. I said I would help her look for it. After about ten minutes I shouted to Bridget that I had found her ornament. She was very pleased with me, she said she would do anything for me. That is, until I asked for £2. She looked aghast! She thought I was joking. I said I would drop the ornament on the floor if she didn't pay up. Bridget said she only had

£1.50 on her, I said that will have to do for now, bring the rest in tomorrow. I gave her the ornament.

The next day Bridget came to school without the 50p. I said if she didn't pay up that the price would double each day until she paid or I would get nasty. She called me a dirty little poor girl from a one parent family. Then she walked off laughing.

I was hurt. I couldn't help being dirty or from a poor family or that my dad died in a car accident or that my mum just sitting around crying all day and not looking after us like she used to.

When it came to Outdoor Games time it took me ages to put on my plimsolls as they were getting far too small for me. Bridget and everyone else had gone outside. I put one of her shiny new shoes under my tee-shirt, went out the changing room and dropped the shoe in the bin in the playground. That'll teach her, I thought.

When we returned, Bridget was so pleased with herself doing well in the netball game. That was until she got dressed and couldn't find her left shoe. Needless to say I didn't try to help her look for it. She wasn't too happy at having to go home in her plimsolls either. The next day she came to school with an even shinier pair of shoes.

They weren't that shiny when I dropped a paint pot on them in Art Class. I apologised to her over and over and our teacher said it was an accident and Bridget shouldn't have worn her best shoes to school.

On the Friday I stopped at Woolworths and bought my mum a lovely ornament with the £1.50. I hid it in my school bag.

When I got home mum wasn't there. A Policewoman was there instead. She spoke nicely to me and explained that mum had been found wandering the streets in a dirty nightgown. That mum was unable to look after us at the moment and I would be taken to somewhere safe. She said that my brothers and sisters had already been taken and I would be joining them.

I so wanted to see my brothers and sisters. But I was too late, Reggie and Ryan had gone to one Foster carers home. Doris and Daisy to another. As I was older I don't think anybody wanted me, so I stayed in a care home. I went to a different school which was ok, I suppose.

Mum was in a hospital and I was allowed to see her once a month. She never came out and died in 1975. They said it was from a broken heart.

I never bothered to try and extort any money out of anyone ever again. There just wasn't anybody around that I wanted to make happy.