

WHY

No one sees the man sitting in the corner
Watching and looking and reading
Thinking about dignity, respect and humanity
No one sees the dried tears
No one sees the paper in his hands
The story on page three
Face book bullies claim another
The headline screams

A tragedy by any means of spite and hatred and fears
And loved ones who shed a torrent of tears
The targets so young, so old, so full of life
Who knows what talents have been lost forever

The story said the Coroner will ask some questions
To find out why and who and what
Lay behind the tragic loss
No words offered on the stand by those involved will give
comfort
To those demanding answers
And the stony silence grows
As the media demands the inside news
And legal people are waiting in the wings

The story has a familiar sound
Cases like this abound across the nation
A scourge, a plague, a cancerous sore
We shake our hands in frustration
Can we do more?
What is this bullying culture?

What happened to a fair go
Or standing by our mates
The horse has bolted, shut the gate,
It's a bit too late
We don't know if we should trust our mates
They use their words to rip our hearts
To little shreds

Why don't they understand
That their tactics are underhand
It's only words they say
They won't break your bones
So ganging up and hunting in packs
Wild animals look for food
And the words cut clean through the heart and mind

Damaged souls
Tormented by demons
Silent witnesses stand idly by
Not wanting to be involved
Not my problem they say
Little knowing they could be next
Turned on by friends
As another life is lost

No one sees what goes on
In someone's mind
When bullies play
Their dangerous game
What triggers a response
No one sees the words
Hurling down this highway in cyber space

No one sees the target
Crying silently
Every night
Too ashamed, too embarrassed to speak
To family, a friend
When will it end?
How will it end?
Driven to the point of no return
Press a button to escape this cruel life

Where no one listens
And no one cares
Or people are too afraid to ask
"Are you OK?"
Where bullies have their fun
And nowhere is safe
Not even behind four walls
No laws to save them
No chance to be someone

No one sees the old man
Now thirty years down the track
Sitting in the same corner
A morning ritual of coffee and a paper
Reading about the changes
More violence, more taxes, harder to survive
No one remembers like he does
The story on page three
All those years ago

As the tears build up
The old man thinks
About words he spoke and wrote
A long time ago
About leaving the world a better place
"Be the change you want the world to be" he said
"Leave a legacy"

He thinks about the tragic loss of life
All those years ago
How the world will never know what they missed
Another Mozart, an Einstein or Mother Theresa
Of joy and happiness to a family who lost
A love forever
A brother, a sister, a mother, a friend
Who knows what might have been
A life taken, a tragic end

Of conversations with those near and dear
Who told him of being bullied when they were young
And how they never forgot the feeling
Of abuse, of being unwanted, a lonely child
Cast aside like a rag doll
To find their own way
And come out a stronger person

The old man thinks of those faceless bullies
Using their technology to destructive use
Do they feel guilt or remorse?
“Who me”, they cry, “no it wasn’t me”
“I didn’t mean it” they say
As if to pass the blame
After it must be the targets fault
It was only a joke they said

“Have they turned their life around and made some good”
he wonders
“Do they know the meaning of dignity and respect and
humanity?”
“Do they really care?”
“Are they corporate giants with a distant memory?”
Living in regret for things they did and said
In the distant past

The old man turns the page looking for good news
Surely today it is time to read about it
No one sees him turn to page three
Like a stake through his heart
He takes a sudden breath
The memories come flooding back to that time
Thirty years ago when he turned to page three
Surely not, it can’t true
The bullies have struck again
This time in the corporate world

The tears run freely
Another sleepless night is coming his way
No matter how he tried to spread the word
Some people just didn’t listen or heed the word
He thinks “I did my best”
“If only I could have done some more”

He remembers well talking with the young ones years ago
About bullying and threats and being nasty
And using mobile phones to spread their evil
He remembers well them saying “What would you know
old man?”
He remembers well the parents saying “They’ll grow out of
it”
He remembers well the sayings “Harden up” and “Build a
bridge”
He remembers well the arguments about school chaplains
He remembers well those he helped and how they changed
To be leaders in their fields

He slowly folds the paper
And gathers his things
And stands to shuffle off
Tears running freely
People glance his way and hurry on
Not thinking or caring or knowing
What caused the pain
As he heads home for another night
With a heavy heart and pounding mind
Of thinking of the past
And the everlasting struggle to answer the one word
question
Why?

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