

NEW BOY IN CLASS, 1943

By Bob Ward

We'd been tipped off not
to lean too hard on him,
a boy smaller than most,
paler than a chicken bone
boiled beyond hope of soup.
I recall his attenuated
fingers, the shoulders curling
over perpetual queries
though lifted by a smile
his elder brother, the solitaire,
could hardly ever match.
He was coaxed to the front
to tell how life turned out
against them in a foreign place
where, cornered by teachers,
he wore a dunce-cap lettered 'J'.
I found it all confusing;
his prematurely adult mind
outstripped the rest of us.

Bob Ward is a poet and photographer, specialised in the two mediums. Bob published 'Trusting at Last – a Volume of Bob Ward's poetry' in 2011 and is currently a member of the Quaker Arts Network. Bob submitted his work on Leavers' Poets' Corner Month of September: 'Displacement: Stories of Hope and Humanity'.
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