



Memoir, at the age of six

I flicked your bear by one ear
he somersaulted the morning street
and you laughed, Anne, at his turning feet.
Your mother called "Anne, come on, dear."
You had to go for some fish, and you went
hand in your mother's hand, skipping through
the air.

I went indoors. The siren swooped us there
down into the shelter where, crouching we heard
that droning rocket engine cut —
we judged how long to wait
and knew it would land near.
The candle flame flickered.....

..... and Anne, but Anne, it had torn
and you and your mother and the smiling bear
were shrapnelled to hell in spitting blood.
I forced my mother to tell, and there was and is
for ever an empty arc in the air
where a bear should somersault,
for ever a vacuum where your laughter
should be heard.

Kevin James

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