

# Conkers

*The following extract concerns a boy called Robbie who is bullied by two other boys, Wayne and Shayne.*

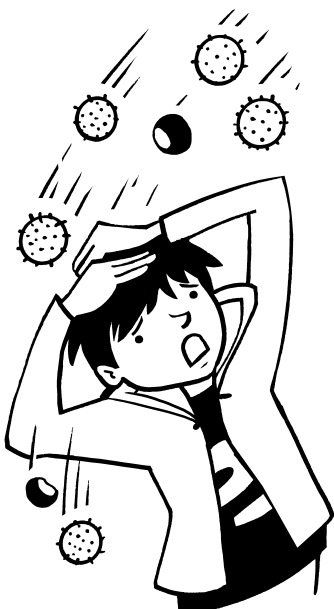


The twins shouted swearwords at Robbie the whole way. He walked faster, they walked faster. He started to jog, they started to jog. He started to run, they started to run.

Robbie contemplated taking the short cut that connected Greenway Lane to Oldroad Park but he decided that would be silly as the path was so narrow and secluded that if they caught him they would be able to do anything to him. So, although he was getting exhausted, Robbie carried on running up the slope of Greenway Lane. Then he reached the three conker trees.

The twins stopped as they couldn't resist picking up conkers. Robbie glanced back, then slowed down a bit, as he was really out of breath. He looked back. Yes, they were busy, so Robbie slowed to a walk.

Minutes later, Robbie sighed with relief as he turned into Oldroad Park. 'Safe,' he thought to himself as he could see his house about two hundred metres ahead.



Suddenly Robbie felt his back being pelted with something very hard and spiky. Wayne and Shayne were just behind him with armfuls of conkers still in their shells. They had obviously doubled back and cut through the pathway to reach Oldroad Park at about the same time as Robbie.

Showers of sharp conker shells rained down on Robbie. He simply curled into a ball with his arms protecting his head. The conkers continued to come pounding down on his head and body. The two boys were picking up the fallen ammunition and firing it again and again. They were shrieking with enjoyment over the success of their attack but suddenly their shrieks turned to yelps of pain.

Cautiously Robbie looked up and, with amazement, he saw Wayne and Shayne themselves doubled up in defensive positions.

There was Erica, dressed in her tennis outfit, wielding her tennis racket, picking up conkers with astonishing speed and belting them as hard as she could at Robbie's attackers.

"Don't you dare touch my brother again!" she shouted, with a ferocity that Robbie had only ever seen reserved for him.