

WORDS FROM THE AFTERLIFE

By Oliver Newman, aged 10 (words 493)

I wonder what my old friend is thinking

Sitting alone in his cell

No warmth or comfort around him

He doesn't look like he's doing too well

He is due to be hanged tomorrow

Because of a murder on our farm

Why, oh why, I want to ask him why

Did you have to cause all this harm

I am visiting him as a spirit

Because I am dead you see

I can see all around what is happening here

But he can't see me

I tell him to confess his crime

He nods like he can hear me

When the guards and priest visit him next

He says he is guilty

Writing this poem and looking back
I can't stop thinking about him
And how in that exact crazy moment
He made my life so grim

Six months ago is where it began
In October 1843
He came to us from Parkhurst
He was a detainee

He was small for his age
Just a few years younger than me
Even though, he was a hard worker
And a pretty good trainee

We became mates
Our friendship sure did grow fast
It seems we were alike
Despite our different pasts

I think my mum never liked him
Said he was not her real son
That was part of the problem
And how all this madness begun

Just moments later after lunch

Everything went black

I woke up here in the afterlife

John had finished his attack

When my mum entered my room

I was already gone

And even though I was laying there dead

I heard her scream out “John!”

Suddenly my view changed

I was staring at the creek

When John walked by

I saw his cunning technique

He washed my blood right off him

Then he heard his name

He went home very slowly

I think he knew he was to blame

This is the trial of John Gavin

It is now my mum’s turn to speak

She tells the judge she wants that boy hanged

John’s future, like his past, looks bleak

She told the jury what happened
How the adze was the tool
When he struck my head while I slept in my bed
That he is the fool

Easter Saturday has now arrived
John's face is full of dread
My thoughts are the same as when he killed me that day
I can't wait for him to be dead

The horse and cart is here at the Round House
And weights are attached to his feet
He is breathing fast and looks terrified
Soon he would have no heartbeat

Over his head the cap now goes
He is beginning to dangle
Excuse me, I want to have a better view
Yes, this is a better angle

Hello John, we meet again...
We are now both dead
Shall we become friends again
Let's look to the future ahead