

## Alright in the morning: Richard Vasey

Old Richard followed the thin legged boy along the damp streets of a small, provincial city. The boy was in shorts, one size too big for his small frame and his long socks were at half-mast. His bottle green school jacket was covered in gravy stains down the front, the result of a recent food fight in the school canteen.

The boy stopped outside a poorly maintained Victorian terrace with a brass plaque announcing the list of specialist dentists. Old Richard peered over the boy's shoulder and read the referral letter. Old Richard silently called out, 'Dr Stonegate NOT Stonehouse!'

The boy looking stressed, was seen pacing up and down the front of the building, then Old Richard followed him to the passageway at the back.

Old Richard called out, 'Don't do it!' but the boy appeared not to hear and climbed over the garden wall. A window was ajar and the boy looked at the mass of papers on the desk. He guiltily looked around before climbing through the window. He picked up a piece of paper and carefully exited.

Sometime later Old Richard found the boy sitting on a park bench. The boy was quietly sobbing.

Old Richard spoke calmly to the boy. 'No, the police won't arrive at your door. It's OK to make mistakes. People might say you're dumb, stupid, even thick.

'You WILL prove them wrong and everything will be alright in the morning.'