

LEAVING HOME

By Michael Rosen

I ran away from home. I said, I'm going on the Aldermaston March to ban the bomb. They said that this was out of the question, the boy's mad. Crazy. My mother said, Where will you stay? You'd have nothing to eat, you don't know anyone, what would you eat? You're not going. Harold, say something, he's too young, look at him, he's packing. You can't go without a spare pair of trousers, how can he carry a bag like that for twenty miles a day? Stop him, Harold. What would you do in the evening? You need to eat, you get ill if you don't eat. Take a tin of beans. You can always eat beans. Harold, stop him. There's the chicken. Take the chicken. If you're taking a tin of beans, take two. He's thirteen, Harold. Go next year, wait till next year, they won't have banned the bomb by then, believe me. There'll be another march. Go on that one. You must keep eating fresh fruit. And you like dates. He's always liked dates, hasn't he, Harold? Just squeeze them in down the side of the bag. Couldn't he wait till the last day, when we'll be there? We can all go to Trafalgar Square together. Harold, have you got the chicken? Just because it's Easter, doesn't mean it's warm. It can snow at Easter. Wear the string vest. Who's organized the coaches? Do we know these people, Harold? One orange! Take five. And raisins. He's thirteen. It's ridiculous, He can't go. Keep the chicken wrapped. Phone us if you need more food. Goodbye.



POEMS