

the short life and death of **my little brother** (3) happy hours

My father used to carry Guy and his board to the top of the hill _____ all he had to do was ride down at speed. Guy also liked swings and, helped by my father's pushes, _____ in his courage at going higher and faster than other children. He loved cricket and my father decided it would be Guy's sport since he could bat or keep wicket standing in virtually the same spot. When Guy was batting, he was awarded runs _____ how far he hit the ball. Yet, _____, he got tired quickly and often stopped for a rest before he was out.

Guy _____ sword-fighting and had acquired a passion for King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table because we lived near King Arthur's Castle and because he had watched a television _____ their legendary lives. As the elder brother, I had to accept that sword-fighting meant being hurt, but not hurting my younger brother. It was _____ that when Guy asked for a new sword for Christmas, I requested a shield two months later for my birthday. We spent many happy hours at the castle, high above the coast, where my father and brother always arrived _____ the car exhausted: Guy from playing with me on the castle ruins and walking part of the way back, my father from carrying my brother up the steepest parts.

Because of the problems over his health, it was sometimes easy to _____ Guy's talents. One of his teachers described him as "the most promising boy" she had ever taught. He collected stamps and coins and loved the I-Spy books, toy soldiers and history. At the age of seven, he could _____ put Jesus, King Arthur, "William the Conk", "Fat Henry" and Napoleon in their correct chronological order. He was _____ space travel and his favourite television programme was Dr Who.

He played the piano and enjoyed Sandy Shaw's Puppet on a String as much as Brahms' second piano concerto. He was highly sensitive, usually _____ the underdog, preferring Red Indians to cowboys. When his Sunday school teacher told him the story of Herod _____ all baby boys killed, he boycotted the school for a month, long after the teacher had apologised _____ him. He adored animals and once asked: "Why don't we kill humans to feed them to animals?"

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