

**WHEN PA COMES HOME BY EDGAR A. GUEST**

When Pa comes home, I'm at the door,  
An' then he grabs me off the floor  
An' throws me up an' catches me  
When I come down, an' then, says he:  
"Well, how'd you get along to-day?  
An' were you good, an' did you play,  
An' keep right out of mamma's way?  
An' how'd you get that awful bump  
Above your eye? My, what a lump!  
An' who spilled jelly on your shirt?  
An' where'd you ever find the dirt  
That's on your hands? And my! Oh, my!  
I guess those eyes have had a cry,  
They look so red. What was it, pray?  
What has been happening here to-day?"

An' then he drops his coat an' hat  
Upon a chair, an' says: "What's that?  
Who knocked that engine on its back  
An' stepped upon that piece of track?"  
An' then he takes me on his knee  
An' says: "What's this that now I see?  
Whatever can the matter be?  
Who strewed those toys upon the floor,  
An' left those things behind the door?  
Who upset all those parlor chairs  
An' threw those blocks upon the stairs?  
I guess a cyclone called to-day  
While I was workin' far away.  
Who was it worried mamma so?  
It can't be anyone I know."

An' then I laugh an' say: "It's me!  
Me did most ever'thing you see.  
Me got this bump the time me tripped.  
An' here is where the jelly slipped  
Right off my bread upon my shirt,  
An' when me tumbled down it hurt.  
That's how me got all over dirt.  
Me threw those building blocks downstairs,  
An' me upset the parlor chairs,  
Coz when you're playin' train you've got  
To move things 'round an awful lot."  
An' then my Pa he kisses me  
An' bounces me upon his knee  
An' says: "Well, well, my little lad,  
What glorious fun you must have had!"

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Poems

### **MOTHER'S GLASSES BY EDGAR A. GUEST**

I've told about the times that Ma can't find her pocketbook,  
And how we have to hustle round for it to help her look,  
But there's another care we know that often comes our way,  
I guess it happens easily a dozen times a day.  
It starts when first the postman through the door a letter passes,  
And Ma says: "Goodness gracious me! Wherever are my glasses?"

We hunt 'em on the mantelpiece an' by the kitchen sink,  
Until Ma says: "Now, children, stop, an' give me time to think  
Just when it was I used 'em last an' just exactly where.  
Yes, now I know - the dining room. I'm sure you'll find 'em there."  
We even look behind the clock, we busy boys an' lasses,  
Until somebody runs across Ma's missing pair of glasses.

We've found 'em in the Bible, an' we've found 'em in the flour,  
We've found 'em in the sugar bowl, an' once we looked an hour  
Before we came across 'em in the padding of her chair;  
An' many a time we've found 'em in the topknot of her hair.  
It's a search that ruins order an' the home completely wrecks,  
For there's no place where you may not find poor Ma's elusive specs.

But we're mighty glad, I tell you, that the duty's ours to do,  
An' we hope to hunt those glasses till our time of life is through;  
It's a little bit of service that is joyous in its thrill,  
It's a task that calls us daily an' we hope it always will.  
Rich or poor, the saddest mortals of all the joyless masses  
Are the ones who have no mother dear to lose her reading glasses.

**A REAL MAN BY EDGAR A. GUEST**

Men are of two kinds, and he  
Was of the kind I'd like to be.  
Some preach their virtues, and a few  
Express their lives by what they do.  
That sort was he. No flowery phrase  
Or glibly spoken words of praise  
Won friends for him. He wasn't cheap  
Or shallow, but his course ran deep,  
And it was pure. You know the kind.  
Not many in a life you find  
Whose deeds outrun their words so far  
That more than what they seem they are.

There are two kinds of lies as well:  
The kind you live, the ones you tell.  
Back through his years from age to youth  
He never acted one untruth.  
Out in the open light he fought  
And didn't care what others thought  
Nor what they said about his fight  
If he believed that he was right.  
The only deeds he ever hid  
Were acts of kindness that he did.

What speech he had was plain and blunt.  
His was an unattractive front.  
Yet children loved him; babe and boy  
Played with the strength he could employ,  
Without one fear, and they are fleet  
To sense injustice and deceit.  
No back door gossip linked his name  
With any shady tale of shame.  
He did not have to compromise  
With evil-doers, shrewd and wise,  
And let them ply their vicious trade  
Because of some past escapade.

Men are of two kinds, and he  
Was of the kind I'd like to be.  
No door at which he ever knocked  
Against his manly form was locked.  
If ever man on earth was free  
And independent, it was he.  
No broken pledge lost him respect,  
He met all men with head erect,  
And when he passed, I think there went  
A soul to yonder firmament  
So white, so splendid and so fine  
It came almost to God's design.

**ROSES BY EDGAR A. GUEST**

When God first viewed the rose He'd made  
He smiled, and thought it passing fair;  
Upon the bloom His hands He laid,  
And gently blessed each petal there.  
He summoned in His artists then  
And bade them paint, as ne'er before,  
Each petal, so that earthly men  
Might love the rose for evermore.

With Heavenly brushes they began  
And one with red limned every leaf,  
To signify the love of man;  
The first rose, white, betokened grief;  
"My rose shall deck the bride," one said  
And so in pink he dipped his brush,  
"And it shall smile beside the dead  
To typify the faded blush."

And then they came unto His throne  
And laid the roses at His feet,  
The crimson bud, the bloom full blown,  
Filling the air with fragrance sweet.  
"Well done, well done!" the Master spake;  
"Henceforth the rose shall bloom on earth:  
One fairer blossom I will make,"  
And then a little babe had birth.

On earth a loving mother lay  
Within a rose-decked room and smiled,  
But from the blossoms turned away  
To gently kiss her little child,  
And then she murmured soft and low,  
"For beauty, here, a mother seeks.  
None but the Master made, I know,  
The roses in a baby's cheeks."

**THE LITTLE CHURCH BY EDGAR A. GUEST**

The little church of Long Ago,  
where as a boy I sat  
With mother in the family pew,  
and fumbled with my hat--  
How I would like to see it now  
the way I saw it then,  
The straight-backed pews, the  
pulpit high, the women and the men  
Dressed stiffly. In their Sunday  
clothes and solemnly devout,  
Who closed their eyes when  
prayers were said and never looked about--  
That little church of Long Ago,  
it wasn't grand to see,  
But even as a little boy it  
meant a lot to me.  
The choir loft where father sang  
comes back to me again;  
I hear his tenor voice once more  
the way I heard it when  
The deacons used to pass the  
plate, and once again I see  
The people fumbling for their  
coins, as glad as they could be  
To drop their quarters on the  
plate, and I'm a boy once more  
With my two pennies in my fist  
that mother gave before  
We left the house, and once  
again I'm reaching out to try  
To drop them on the plate  
before the deacon passes by.  
It seems to me I'm sitting in  
that high-backed pew, the while  
The minister is preaching in  
that good old-fashioned style;  
And though I couldn't understand  
it all somehow I know  
The Bible was the text book in  
that church of Long Ago;  
He didn't preach on politics,  
but used the word of God,  
And even now I seem to see the  
people gravely nod,  
As though agreeing thoroughly  
with all he had to say,  
And then I see them thanking  
him before they go away.  
The little church of Long Ago  
was not a structure huge,  
It had no hired singers or no  
other subterfuge  
To get the people to attend,

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## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Poems

'twas just a simple place  
Where every Sunday we were told  
about God's saving grace;  
No men of wealth were gathered  
there to help it with a gift;  
The only worldly thing it had—  
a mortgage hard to lift.  
And somehow, dreaming here to-day,  
I wish that I could know  
The joy of once more sitting  
in that church of Long Ago.

**THE PRICELESS GIFT OF CHRISTMAS BY HELEN STEINER RICE**

Now Christmas is a season  
for joy and merrymaking,  
A time for gifts and presents  
for giving and for taking...  
A festive, friendly, happy time  
when everyone is gay-  
But have we really felt  
the greatness of the day?...  
For through the centuries the world  
has wandered far away  
From the beauty and the meaning  
of the Holy Christmas Day...  
For Christmas is a heavenly gift  
that only God can give,  
It's ours just for the asking  
for as long as we shall live...  
It can't be bought or bartered,  
it can't be won or sold,  
It doesn't cost a penny  
and it's worth far more than gold.  
It isn't bright and gleaming  
for eager eyes to see,  
It can't be wrapped in tinsel  
or placed beneath a tree...  
It isn't soft and shimmering  
for reaching hands to touch,  
Or some expensive luxury  
you've wanted very much...  
For the Priceless Gift of Christmas  
is meant just for the heart,  
And we receive it only  
when we become a part  
Of the kingdom and the Glory  
which is ours to freely take,  
For God sent the Holy Christ Child  
at Christmas for our sake  
So man might come to know Him  
and feel His presence near,  
And see the many miracles  
performed while He was here...  
And this Priceless Gift for Christmas  
is within the reach of all,  
The rich, the poor, the young and old,  
the greatest and the small...  
So take His priceless Gift of Love,  
reach out and you'll receive,  
And the only payment that God asks  
is just that you Believe.

**WHAT IS LIFE? BY HELEN STEINER RICE**

Life is a sojourn here on earth  
Which begins the day God gives us birth.  
We enter this world from the Great unknown  
And God gives each Spirit and form of its own;  
And endows this form with a heart and a soul  
To spur man on to his ultimate goal –  
And through the senses of feeling and seeing  
God makes man into a human being;  
So he may experience a mortal life  
And through this period of smiles and strife;  
Prepare himself to Return as he Came,  
For birth and death are in essence the same.  
For both are fashioned by God's mighty hand  
And, while we cannot understand;  
We know we are born to die and arise  
For beyond this world in beauty lies;  
The purpose of living and the ultimate goal  
God gives at birth to each seeking soul –  
So enjoy your sojourn on earth and be glad  
That God gives you a choice between Good Things and Bad,  
And only be sure that you Heed God's Voice  
Whenever life asks you to make a choice.



**THE SINGER'S REVENGE BY EDGAR A. GUEST**

It was a singer of renown  
Who did a desperate thing.  
For all who asked him out to dine  
Requested him to sing.  
The imposition on his art  
They couldn't seem to see  
For friendship's sake they thought  
He ought to work without a fee.

And so he planned a dinner, too,  
of fish and fowl and wine  
And asked his friends of high degree  
To come with him to dine.  
His banker and his tailor came,  
His doctor, too, was there,  
Likewise a leading plumber  
who'd become a millionaire.

The singer fed his guests and smiled,  
A gracious host was he;  
With every course he ladled out  
delicious flattery,  
And when at last the meal was done,  
He tossed his man a wink,  
"Good friends," said he,  
I've artists here you'll all enjoy, I think.

I've trousers needing buttons, Mr. Tailor,  
If you please,  
Will you oblige us all to-night  
By sewing some on these?  
I've several pairs all handy-by,  
Now let your needle jerk;  
My guests will be delighted  
To behold you as you work.

"Now, doctor, just a moment, pray,  
I cannot sing a note:  
I asked you here because I thought  
You'd like to spray my throat;  
I know that during business hours  
For this you charge a fee,  
But surely you'll be glad to serve my friends,  
Tonight, and me?"

The plumber then was asked if  
He would mend a pipe or two;  
A very simple thing, of course,  
To urge a friend to do;  
But reddest grew the banker's face  
And reddest grew his neck,  
Requested in his dinner clothes  
To cash a good sized check.

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## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Poems

His guests astounded looked at him.  
Said they: "We are surprised!  
To ask us here to work for you  
Is surely ill-advised.  
'Tis most improper, impolite!"  
The singer shrieked in glee:  
"My friends I've only treated you  
As you have treated me."

### **WHAT IS LOVE? BY HELEN STEINER RICE**

What is love? No words can define it,  
It's something so great  
Only God could design it...

Wonders of Wonders, beyond man's conception,  
And only in God can love find true perfection,  
For love means much more than small words can express,

For what man calls love is so very much less  
Than the beauty and depth and the true richness of God's gift to mankind –  
His compassionate love...

For love has become a word that's misused,  
Perverted, distorted and often abused,  
To speak of "light romance" or some affinity for  
A passing attraction that is seldom much more  
Than a mere interlude of inflamed fascination,  
A romantic fling of no lasting duration...

But love is enduring and patient and kind,  
It judges all things with the heart not the mind,  
And love can transform the most commonplace  
Into beauty and splendor and sweetness and Grace...

For love is unselfish, giving more than it takes,  
And no matter what happens love never forsakes.  
It's faithful and trusting and always believing,  
Guileless and honest and never deceiving...

Yes, love is beyond what man can define,  
For love is Immortal and God's Gift is Divine!

**MOTHER'S UGLY HANDS BY MARY MASON**

When Jean was just a little girl  
She used to play for hours  
With Tinker-Cat or Peter-Dog,  
Or help Mom with her flowers.  
But then sometimes her mom would stop  
The work she had to do  
To read to Jean or play with her;  
And as God planned, Jean grew.  
But then one day she realized  
Her mom was not the same  
As those of other little girls:  
And Jean grew up with shame.  
For Mother's hands were ugly hands,  
Misformed and scarred and red.  
And somehow love for Mother changed  
To selfishness and dread.  
Somehow she never asked her mom  
How those scars came to be,  
Too busy with the selfish fear  
That other eyes might see.  
But then one time Jean's grandma came  
With suitcase packed to stay,  
And it was at her grandma's feet  
The truth came out one day.  
"When you were just a tiny thing,  
About the age of two  
One day your clothing caught on fire,  
Though how we never knew;  
Your mother said she scarcely felt  
The searing tongues of flame,  
As with her hands she fought the fire  
And that is how she came  
To have the scars you hate so much;  
She did it all for you.  
You were not burned as bad as she,  
And so you never knew."  
"Oh, Grandma, I am so ashamed!"  
And Jean began to weep.  
"To think my mother loved me so!"  
That night she couldn't sleep  
And made her way to Mother's room  
And in a rush of tears  
Received forgiveness for the hate  
She harbored all those years.  
That's how it is with Mother love;  
Of death it's unafraid  
So very much like dying love  
On Calvary's hill portrayed.  
Our Jesus too, bears ugly marks  
Of suffering and of pain,  
He did it all for you and me,  
But it was not in vain.  
For, as we view His suffering,  
We, too must cry, "Forgive!"

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## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Poems

For only through His dying love  
Are we prepared to live.  
I'm thankful, God, for Mother love  
Which bravely fought the fire,  
And for my Jesus' dying love  
Which that love did inspire.