

Hank Snow, What Is Father

Almost any evening about six an adult male can be seen taking off his shoes
Putting on house slippers picking up the evening paper
And reclining deep in the softest chair in the living room of any well regulated home
No sooner is he seated comfortably when small creatures call children
Climb up on top of him muss his hair tumble in his lap kiss him and hug him
And run for mother when he lets out a great big yell
He is not a monster although he is sometimes accused of it when he loses his temper
He is not exactly a stranger in the house although he mostly sleeps and eats there
He is not a boarder although he thinks sometimes that it would be cheaper for him
No he is none of these things he is a father
Father's come in assorted shapes sizes and ages but all have one common creed
To always provide to the best of his ability
All the comforts of good living to his wife and family
To always have a little extra change in his pockets for the children
Bills of large denominations for his wife and family expenses
And a secret hidden compartment in his wallet for bills of a smaller denominations
For his own pleasures which are few
Fathers are a necessary item in each home
They are handy for putting up storm windows painting screens
Mowing the lawn nailing a shelf lifting heavy objects
Moving the furniture wiping the dishes cleaning the basement
And they are perfect as a soft touch when the kids need spending money
Children adore them house to house salesmen hate them
Wives tolerate them and heaven and the insurance companies protect them
At home a father is usually quiet unassuming and casual
He answers to names like daddy dad pop popsey the old man that stinker
And that loveable character of the mister of the house
He answers most questions with inaudible mumbles daydreaming glances
Or house shaking bellows depending on the situation
Get him into his best blue suit and well starched collar and he complains bitterly
But once at the party he becomes the speaker of the evening
He tells jokes he would never tolerate at home and he dances with all the girls
Wears the lampshade as a hula costume
And protests loudly when the last hour's finished and mother bustles him homeward
Fathers are a paradox they will fight man or beast to protect the family
Yet an upset stomach or a minor pain is reason enough to cause loud moaning and groaning
And checking to see if the last will and testament is in order
He walks ten miles on the golfcourse but takes the car to mail a letter at the corner
He eats like a horse but uses sacchrine in his coffee because he is on a diet
He hollers bloody murder when the bills come due
But always manages to come up with a nice gift at the appropriate time
He is a devil an angel a saint a gallant gentleman an uncouth creature
A wise business man and a sucker for a sob story
Fathers are people who snore the loudest use the bathroom the longest
Can't find shirts underwear and socks the ofteness
And holler the loudest when mother and the kids are not dressed and ready to go when he is
Fathers should never be bothered when they are reading the paper when monthly bills arrive
The 15th of March and on Sunday mornings
Fathers like books golf a good smoke open necked shirts house slippers tweed suits
A soft bed cards hammocks after-shave lotions sports sleeping late lodge nights and one woman
They are not so much for company neck-ties shaving perfumes after dinner speakers
Crowds lawnmowers relatives mother's new hat diets cuff links collar buttons
Empty refrigerators tuxedos garters and dentisits
They remember business appointments luncheons sporting data and taxes
But forget birthdays anniversaries grocery lists and the ring in the bathtub
Yes father's are strange customers
They holler and beller and complain they never seem to do things the right way
They bundle the kids off to sunday school then sleep through church
They are outwardly tough and inwardly sentimental
And they are the little boys of yesterday grown up
And yet when this big rough tough rugged self-sufficient man talks with his Lord
When and where no other human can see him in his humility
He will invariable say something like this

Dear Beloved Father thanks for seeing my family safely through another day in these uncertain times
Thanks for the health the food and the goodness you have bestowed upon my loved ones
Thanks for helpin' to make of me the man my kids think I am
Thanks for forgiving my transgressions and shortcomings and for helping me to walk closer in Thy
Thanks again for my wonderful home and family and above all thanks for the woman you have blessed
The mother of my children my wonderful understanding wife
Please watch over them while I am away and bring peace to all families like ours everywhere
I ask this in Your name
Thanks Father
Amen