

The Family's Homely Man

There never was a family without its homely man,
With legs a little longer than the ordinary plan,
An' a shock of hair that brush an' comb can't ever straighten out,
An' hands that somehow never seem to know what they're about;
The one with freckled features and a nose that looks as though
It was fashioned by the youngsters from a chunk of mother's dough.
You know the man I'm thinking of, the homely one an' plain,
That fairly oozes kindness like a rosebush dripping rain.
His face is never much to see, but back of it there lies
A heap of love and tenderness and judgment, sound and wise.

And so I sing the homely man that's sittin' in his chair,
And pray that every family will always have him there.
For looks don't count for much on earth; it's hearts that wear the gold;
An' only that is ugly which is selfish, cruel, cold.
The family needs him, Oh, so much; more, maybe, than they know;
Folks seldom guess a man's real worth until he has to go,
But they will miss a heap of love an' tenderness the day
God beckons to their homely man, an' he must go away.

He's found in every family, it doesn't matter where
They live or be they rich or poor, the homely man is there.
You'll find him sitting quiet-like and sort of drawn apart,
As though he felt he shouldn't be where folks are fine an' smart.
He likes to hide himself away, a watcher of the fun,
An' seldom takes a leading part when any game's begun.
But when there's any task to do, like need for extra chairs,
I've noticed it's the homely man that always climbs the stairs.

And always it's the homely man that happens in to mend
The little toys the youngsters break, for he's the children's friend.
And he's the one that sits all night to watch beside the dead,
And sends the worn-out sorrowers and broken hearts to bed.
The family wouldn't be complete without him night or day,
To smooth the little troubles out and drive the cares away.

Edgar Albert Guest (1881-1959)