

# 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 saccharine 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 dentists  
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