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Here Comes the Poetry Man

Written by

Fred Sedgwick

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FRED SEDGWICK
Here Comes the Poetry Man

Fred Sedgwick was born in Ireland and brought up in London. He has been a freelance writer, teacher and lecturer since 1990. He is the author of hundreds of poems in anthologies for children, and over thirty books: about teaching writing, *Shakespeare and the Young Writer* (Routledge), etymology, *Where Words Come From*, (Continuum) and art education. He is a father (to Daniel) and a grandfather (to Malachi).

Also by Fred Sedgwick

Hey! with John Cotton (Mary Glasgow, 1990)

The Biggest Riddle in the World with John Cotton (Mary Glasgow, 1990)

Pizza Curry Fish and Chips (Longman, 1994)

Blind Date (Tricky Sam! Press, 1999)

The Ammonite's Revenge with John Cotton (Tricky Sam! Press, 2000)

Stone and Other Poems (Happy Dragons Press, 2004)

FRED
SEDGWICK

Here Comes the Poetry Man

Poems for Young People



Children's Poetry Library
No. 9



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for Daniel, Lizi and Malachi

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Also: *This Way That Way* (Mary Glasgow, 1989); *The Orchard Book of Funny Poems* (Orchard, 1993); *Young Hippo Spooky Poems* (Scholastic, 1998); *Someone I Like* (Barefoot Books, 2000); *Jenny Kissed Me* (Questions, 2000); *101 Favourite Poems* (Harper Collins, 2002); *Haven't You Grown!* (Kingfisher, 2003); *Disgusting Poems* (Scholastic, 2004); *Why does my Mum always iron a crease in my jeans?* (Puffin, 2005); *Read Away* (Forlag Malling, Denmark, 2007); *Back on Track* (Natur & Kultur, Sweden, 2010) and *Michael Rosen's A to Z: the best children's poetry from Agard to Zephaniah* (Puffin, 2009).

FIRST THING TODAY

(for Jimmy)

First thing today before
the cockerel crowed —
a baby's cry
from across the road.

Hi there baby,
damp and furled,
hi there. Welcome
to our world.

Here's the little finger
of my right hand
and here's a teddy
you won't understand

yet
and
here's

flowers for your mummy
and what about this?
Here's my first hug
and my first kiss.

FRED SEDGWICK

POEM FOR ELOISE

O Eloise my Eloise
my hay-feverish
keeper of bees
walking alone
under sun-dappled trees
you could charm the sunlight
from those trees
you could charm the honey
from those bees
O Eloise my Eloise

O Eloise my Eloise
with your bright eyes
and pretty knees
you'll find a boy
but learn that he's
not worthy of you Eloise
not fit to climb your sunny trees
or take the honey from your bees
not fit to carry your house keys
O Eloise my Eloise

But please
my Eloise
don't
(ACHOO!)

[Eloise sneezes]

sneeze

my Eloise

FRED SEDGWICK

AUNTIE'S BOYFRIEND

Auntie's brought her boyfriend home. He's sitting in a chair.
He wears an earring and he's got no hair.

He's crazy about football and I'm glad about that.
He's polite to my Granny, he's kind to the cat.
But I have to make an effort not to stand and stare
'*Cos he wears an earring and he's got no hair.*

He eats his dinner nicely. His manners are OK.
He sips his tea in silence in an ordinary way.
He nibbles with decorum at a chocolate éclair—
But he wears an earring and he's got no hair.

I'll ring up the gang. I'll ring them for a dare:
'Come round this evening, there's a secret I must share.
Auntie's brought her boyfriend home. He's sitting in a chair
And he wears an earring and he's got no hair'.

ELOISE ALONE

In faded jeans
and anorak
I walk along
the railway track.

Disused for more than
twenty years,
it calms my thunder-
storm of tears.

The rails are going
who knows where
and I'd go too
but I don't dare.

The voices raised
in disarray
are long ago
and far away.

Wild flowers wave
like tiny flags
and there's a thrush
that drags and drags

a worm from deep
inside the grass.
The clouds are calm
and small, and cross

the sky beyond
the pylon there …
and I'd go too
but I don't dare.

The argument
that drove me from
the living room
dies and is gone.

In faded jeans
and anorak
I walk along
the railway track.

MY GRANDPARENTS' GOLDEN WEDDING PARTY

There'll be a jazz band,
a jazz band swinging,
in the big tent we'll hire
for their golden wedding.
There'll be a jazz band
& Gran and Grandad
they'll be scatting & singing
he like some old jazzer,
she like some old jazzer.
They'll swing & sing & scat to
the jazz band swinging.

FRED SEDGWICK

MOVING HOUSE

A family's moving house today
  From our estate.
Their lives are lifted out the door
  And through the gate.

Here's a small piano,
  Here's a large guitar.
One's stowed in the big lorry,
  One in the little car.

Here comes a trumpet and a flute.
  Here comes a violin.
Here's some jangling chiming bells
  And a mandolin.

Here's a cello with its bow,
  Here's a set of drums.
Here, smoothly on wheels, the children's
  Karaoke comes!

I don't know where they'll sit to drink
  Their next pot of tea —
But I wish them tunes. And rhythm. And
  I wish them harmony.

A DISGUSTING POEM

Sir said: Write a disgusting poem
about embarrassing stuff—
spots and sick and toilets
and bellybutton fluff …

And I thought: 'That's enough!'

I like poems
about the songs
my mother sometimes sings

and the moon
and the stars
on a summer night

and lying in bed
on Sunday when
the church bell rings

and the glint of creamy white
on waves on foreign shores
and the delicate

marmalade-coloured fur
on my kitten's paws
and starlings' purple wings …

So I wrote that

and Sir said: Fred,
you haven't done what I said.
Forget the moon and the stars at night
write about knickers instead.

FAVOURITE WORDS

Miss said, 'Please write down
your six favourite words'

and mine were 'path' and 'poem',
'jazz', and 'poetry',
'Daddy' and 'samosa'.

Jessica's were 'Jessica',
'purple' (her favourite colour),
'Jess', 'Amanda' (her middle name)
and 'bedroom' and 'me'.

Miss's were 'chocolate'
and 'chocolate' and 'chocolate'
and 'chocolate' and 'chocolate'
and, finally, 'chocolate'.

Craig said his were 'gun' and 'war',
'army-man' and 'CRASH!'
and 'tank' and 'submarine'.

And the new student teacher?
Hers were 'love' and 'peace'
'beach', 'sun', 'wine' and 'Mark'

and we all said
Is that your boyfriend miss?

You can tell a lot about people
from their favourite words.

WHAT THE HEADTEACHER SAID WHEN HE SAW ME RUNNING OUT OF SCHOOL AT 1.15 P.M. ON 21 JULY LAST YEAR TO BUY AN ICE CREAM FROM PELOZZI'S VAN

Hey!*

*This poem is an attempt on three world records at once: the longest title, the longest footnote and the shortest text of any poem in the western world. It has been lodged with the Guinness Book of Records.

FRED SEDGWICK

LOVING GERTIE BEST

I love Hannah's hairstyle
And Danuella's dress.
I love Chloe's class — she is
A clear catwalk success —

But Gertie gets me giggling
And I love Gertie best.

I love Rita's writing,
I love Zara's art.
The music Maisie plays with Pol
Hammers in my heart —
I hear it from the north, the south,
The east and from the west —

But Gertie gets me giggling
And I love Gertie best.

I love Maggie's movement
When she's jiving in the gym.
I love Sabrina's soft good night
When disco lights are dim.

I love the way that Pippa passes
Every little test —

But Gertie gets me giggling
And I love Gertie best.

I love Eram's glossy hair,
I love Nasima's nose.
I love Farida's fingers
And her brightly painted toes.
I love Niamh and Norma
When I'm feeling sad and stressed—

But Gertie gets me giggling
And I love Gertie best.

FRED SEDGWICK

FALL IN LOVE

Fall in love with Lorna,
  fall in love with Sam,
fall in love with Lucy,
  fall in love with Pam.

Fall in love with Margaret,
  fall in love with Frances,
fall in love with Diane —
  wow, the way she dances!

Fall in love with Lillibet.
  Fifi's fine as well.
Fall in love with Phoebe
  even though she cannot spell.

Fall in love with Leila,
  fall in love with Lou,
fall for Jo, Fiona, Jane
  or any of that crew.

Fall in love with whom you like
  as deeply as you dare —
but brace your heart for breaking
  'cos love is never fair.

Fall in love with any girl
  while you're on the shelf—
but don't fall in love with Jenny,

no—

  'cos Jenny's in love with herself.