

Orphans of the Living by Edgar A. Guest

We think of orphans only as the little girls and lads,
Who haven't any mothers and who haven't any dads.
They are grouped with other children and in groups they're put
to bed.
Some stranger paid to listen while their little prayers are said.
All the grown ups look with pity on such lonely
children small,
And declared to be an orphan is the saddest fate of all.

But sometimes I look around me and with sorrow hang my head
As I gaze on something sadder than the orphans of the dead.
For more pitiful and tragic as the long days come and go,
Are the orphans of the parents they're not allowed to know.
They're the ORPHANS OF THE LIVING, left alone to romp and
play.
From their fathers and their mothers by AMBITION shallow way.

They have father who are busy and so weighted down with cares.
That they haven't time to listen to the little child's affairs.
They have mothers who imagine, life could give them if it would,
Something richer, something better, than the joys of motherhood.
So their children learn from strangers and by strangers' hands are
fed,
And the nurse, for so much money, nightly tucks them into bed.

