

*A Poem To Learn English - A poem a day keeps the mind at play*

*By Marianne Raynaud*

*Fill in using the words at the end. The first letter is given. It will be easy to find them if you remember that they should rhyme. Words/syllables to be stressed as the poem is read are in bold.*

Who **am** I, you **ask** and **patiently wait**  
 For **me** to **explain** my **life** and my **fate**  
 Well, for **you**, dear **child**, I'll **tell** you a **tale**  
 You'll forever **recall** every **day** without **fail**

With this **story** and **all** of the **words** that I **choose**  
 You'll **learn** a **language** you **never** will **lose**  
 You'll **find** out **about** all my **joys** and my **pain**  
 And my **verse** will echo in your **mind** once **again**

I **come** from a **country** where the **flowers** smell **sweet**  
 Where **farmers** give **people** fine **crops** they can **eat**  
 Where the **sky** is blue, the **lakes** pure and **clear**  
 The **children** play **games** with nothing to **fear**

The **neighbors** they **hail** you, "How **are** you **today**?"  
 "Are you **happy**, **contented**? Are you **planning** to **stay**?"  
 For this is a **land** where the **people** are **free**  
 The **smiles** on their **faces** is a **joy** to **see**

But it **isn't** so easy to find this **place** in the **sun**  
 For **this** is where **everyone** is **trying** to **come**  
 You aren't **alone**, and what you **have** you must **share**  
 Your **time** and your **money** plus **all** you can **spare**

I've been through **hardships**, I have had **pain**  
 I have felt great **anguish** over and over **again**  
 Have I **suffered** a **lot**? Have I **shed** real **tears**?  
 Yes, but I **haven't** felt **sorrow** as **much** as my **peers**

When I was a **child** just like **you**, my young **man**  
 We were **poor**, with no **home**, we **lived** in a **clan**  
 We couldn't **do** what we **liked**, free **thought** they **forbade**  
 We were **always** **worried** and **always** **afraid**

We **had** to build **courage** and **decide** we should **flee**  
 To a **place** where we'd **feel** in **peace** and **harmony**  
 So we **traveled** for **weeks** with no **firm** land in **sight**  
 Till we **reached** our **journey's** **end** far into the **night**

My **parents** there **settled**, worked **hard** all their **life**  
 I was **sent** to **school**, and **later** they **found** me a **wife**  
 They **wanted** for **me**, what they **hadn't** **achieved**  
 The **learning** and **skills** they **hadn't** **received**

So I **studied** at **high** school and **made** some good **friends**  
 But **that** is not **where** this **long** story **ends**  
 I **learned** a profession, then found **work** I could **do**  
 Became a **carpenter's** **aid**, I would **saw**, **polish** and **glue**

So I **earned** my living and could **make** ends **meet**  
 We had **food** on the **table** and our **neighbors** we'd **greet**  
 My **wife** she was **pleased** and our **kids** got **along**  
 I **saw** how they **grew**, became **tall** and so **strong**

They **studied** **Chinese**, **higher** **physics**, and **French**  
 Their **thirst** for **knowledge** they **never** could **quench**  
 They **played** the piano and their **parents** did **please**  
 They **went** onto **college**, got **prestigious** **degrees**

I'm **talking** to **you**, I'm **telling** you **this**  
 I **expect** you to **listen**—not a **single** word **miss**  
 I want **you** to be **quiet**—and **nothing** **demand**  
 I'd **like** you to **focus** and my **thoughts** **understand**

If **you** learn by **heart** just **half** of these **lines**  
**Respecting** word **order**, **stress** and all of the **rhymes**  
 You'll speak good **English** and wherever you **go**  
 You'll be **welcomed** by **people**—acts of **friendship** they'll **show**

