

The Mad Scientist

My friend's son is eight
And he already knows
He wants to be a mad scientist.

He has posters in his bedroom
Of every famous mad scientist
Since Dr. Sivana, *Captain Marvel's* nemesis.

My friend's son is no joke.
They have to keep him out of the kitchen
When Mom isn't around.

The bathrooms containing cosmetics
And first-aid supplies
Are always locked.

He is resourceful.
He found out by himself how to become a mad scientist,
Starting with clocks.

When everyone is upstairs
He is downstairs
Taking apart the kitchen clock.

When they're downstairs
He is upstairs
Breaking down sister's alarm clock.

He distributes the parts
In a pattern of his own.

The day he undid Father's favorite watch
Grandma came over.

Miniature screws
Gossamer springs
Little golden gears
And components too small to be named
Were spread out on the carpet.

What's all this? asked Grandma.
This is my invention -- I'm a mad scientist.
You're going to put it back together now?
No, no, I don't put it back.
I'm a mad scientist -- this is my invention.

(cont'd)

Twenty years later my friend's son is a poet.
His miniature screws
Gossamer springs
And little golden gears
Are spread out on pages

Intricately, invisibly connected
By a scientist
Madly in love.