

The Homely Man

Looks as though a cyclone hit him—
Can't buy clothes that seem to fit him;
An' his cheeks are rough like leather,
Made for standin' any weather.
Outwards he was fashioned plainly,
Loose o' joint an' blamed ungainly,
But I'd give a lot if I'd
Been built half as fine inside.

Best thing I can tell you of him
Is the way the children love him.
Now an' then I get to thinkin'
He's much like old Abe Lincoln;
Homely like a gargoye graven—
Worse'n that when he's unshaven;
But I'd take his ugly phiz
Jes' to have a heart like his.

I ain't over-sentimental,
But old Blake is so blamed gentle
An' so thoughtfull-like of others
He reminds us of our mothers.
Rough roads he is always smoothing
An' his way is, Oh, so soothin',
That he takes away the sting
When your heart is sorrowing.

Children gather round about him
Like they can't get on without him.
An' the old depend upon him,
Pilin' all their burdens on him,
Like as though the thing that grieves 'em
Has been lifted when he leaves 'em.
Homely? That can't be denied,
But he's glorious inside.

Edgar Albert Guest (1881-1959)