

The First Steps

Last night I held my arms to you
And you held yours to mine
And started out to march to me
As any soldier fine.

You lifted up your little feet
And laughingly advanced;
And I stood there and gazed upon
Your first wee steps, entranced.

You gooped and gurgled as you came
Without a sign of fear;
As though you knew, your journey o'er,
I'd greet you with a cheer.
And, what is more, you seemed to know,
Although you are so small,
That I was there, with eager arms,
To save you from a fall.

Three tiny steps you took, and then,
Disaster and dismay!
Your over-confidence had led
Your little feet astray.
You did not see what we could see
Nor fear what us alarms;
You stumbled, but ere you could fall
I caught you in my arms.

You little tyke, in days to come
You'll bravely walk alone,
And you may have to wander paths
Where dangers lurk unknown.
And, Oh, I pray that then, as now,
When accidents befall
You'll still remember that I'm near
To save you from a fall.

Edgar Albert Guest (1881-1959)