

Another thing I remember was that David had a beautiful voice. It was soft, but clear — tender, but firm — bright and resonant. When David talked, it sounded a lot like someone singing — even *then!*

DAVID'S FIRST TOOTH

When David was a little over three months old, Jack and I were kidding around in the living room one afternoon. Whatever it was we were doing made us laugh and laugh — and our laughter echoed through the house. All at once we heard this little “Hee-hee-hee” coming from somewhere. Jack and I stopped laughing and looked at each other incredulously.

“That sounds like David,” I said.

“Hee-hee-hee-hee,” came the sound.

The laughter continued and it *definitely* was coming from David's room! Jack and I walked in — and there was our adorable son, propped up on his pillow and *laughing!* It was a particularly touching moment. Jack and I just leaned over the crib to have the pleasure of looking at our happy “Smilin' Sam” — who had suddenly become our “Laughin' Sam”. As I looked down at him I noticed something like a little cut in his upper gum. I leaned over for a closer look. David, accommodating me, kept on laughing, so I was able to see inside his mouth.

“Look, Jack,” I finally said, “isn't that a tooth?”

Jack leaned over and verified what I had seen. There it was — David's very first tooth peeking through!

At 13 months, David walked by himself for the first time. Most babies start to walk when they are about one year old, but David was late because he was so “fat”. Just before he walked, he learned to stand up with the help of his little chair. (This chair was the same one I had used to learn to walk with, and it had been in our family for generations.) David would hold onto the back of his little chair, push it a few inches and

then take a step. Once in awhile his “prop” would slip out of his hands — and every time it did, David would sit down with a resounding *kerplunk!* But one day the chair slipped away and David didn't go *kerplunk*. He stood there, looking somewhat astonished at the fact that he hadn't fallen down, giggled — and then took his very first step!

Just about this time, David's red hair started to change color. It slowly turned blond, and by the time he was 15 months old he had a lovely head of shining, light blond hair!

Looking back, one of my fondest memories of my son David is a rather selfish one. It's quite revealing of him as a person. It was the first time I realized how much he loved me — and how capable he is of loving profoundly. One afternoon I came home from New York City, where I had spent the day taking singing and dancing lessons and rehearsing a play I was in. That morning, when I left, David had put up his usual protest.

That evening, as I walked up the cement path to our house, I could see David through the living room window. He was sitting in his high chair, playing with a toy. He couldn't possibly have seen me and no one was nearby to tell him that I was coming. Nevertheless, he whirled his head in my direction. As I walked up the steps, a look of joy beyond compare came upon his face. I don't know how to describe it, but in that second I knew beyond any doubt that my son David loved me with all his heart. He threw his little arms open and happily called, “Mommy! Mommy! Mommy!” My love for him just overflowed. It bubbled up like a gigantic spring from deep inside me and I rushed inside the living room, swept him from his high chair and hugged and kissed him for a long time. It was a beautiful and joyous moment for us both. Neither of us had ever felt so loved and so wanted in our lives, and somehow, deep in my heart, I knew (once again) that David and I would be as close and this — no matter how many miles separated us — as long as we both lived.



Left to right: Ethel (Evelyn's mom); David (at three and a half years); Grandma Cassidy (Jack's mom); Grandpa Fred (Evelyn's dad); and Grandpa Cassidy (Jack's dad).



David, at three and a half years, in front of the Christmas tree in West Orange, with his dad — actor-singer Jack Cassidy. Jack is holding the clown music box he gave David that Christmas.