

Excerpt from
THE BEDTIME RHYME

Walter Wangerin Jr.

Are you my strongest?
Are you my smartest?
Are you my baby true?

Are you my laughigest,
Loudest and lastigest
Friend? Oh, I love you.

I love your eyes
Like fireflies;
I love your ears
Like boutonnières;
I love your back,
Your bones in a sack;
I love your cheeks
And all your teeth,
Your nose and toes and tongue and such--
But you say, "Stop! How much? How much?"

How *much*, my honeydew?
How *much* do I love you?

Lay down your head,
Sweet gingerbread,
And listen: I'll tell you!

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