

# William Blake (1757–1827)

## SONGS OF INNOCENCE

### Introduction

Piping down the valleys wild,  
Piping songs of pleasant glee,  
On a cloud I saw a child  
And he laughing said to me:

‘Pipe a song about a lamb!’ 5  
So I piped with a merry cheer;  
‘Piper, pipe that song again!’  
So I piped – he wept to hear.

‘Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe,  
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!’ 10  
So I sung the same again  
While he wept with joy to hear.

‘Piper, sit thee down and write  
In a book, that all may read.’ 15  
So he vanished from my sight  
And I plucked a hollow reed.

And I made a rural pen,  
And I stained the water clear,  
And I wrote my happy songs  
Every child may joy to hear. 20

### The Shepherd

How sweet is the shepherd’s sweet lot!  
From the morn to the evening he strays;  
He shall follow his sheep all the day  
And his tongue shall be filled with praise.

For he hears the lamb's innocent call, 5  
And he hears the ewe's tender reply;  
He is watchful while they are in peace,  
For they know when their shepherd is nigh.

## **The Echoing Green**

The sun does arise  
And make happy the skies;  
The merry bells ring  
To welcome the spring;  
The skylark and thrush, 5  
The birds of the bush,  
Sing louder around  
To the bells' cheerful sound,  
While our sports shall be seen  
On the echoing green. 10

Old John with white hair  
Does laugh away care,  
Sitting under the oak  
Among the old folk.  
They laugh at our play 15  
And soon they all say,  
'Such, such were the joys  
When we all, girls and boys,  
In our youth-time were seen  
On the echoing green.' 20

Till the little ones weary  
No more can be merry,  
The sun does descend  
And our sports have an end;  
Round the laps of their mothers, 25  
Many sisters and brothers  
Like birds in their nest  
Are ready for rest,  
And sport no more seen  
On the darkening green. 30

## **The Lamb**

Little lamb, who made thee?  
Dost thou know who made thee?  
Gave thee life and bid thee feed  
By the stream and o'er the mead;

Gave thee clothing of delight –	5
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;	
Gave thee such a tender voice,	
Making all the vales rejoice?	
Little lamb, who made thee?	
Dost thou know who made thee?	10
Little lamb, I'll tell thee,	
Little lamb, I'll tell thee;	
He is called by thy name,	
For he calls himself a lamb;	
He is meek and he is mild,	15
He became a little child:	
I a child and thou a lamb,	
We are called by his name.	
Little lamb, God bless thee,	
Little lamb, God bless thee.	20

### **The Little Black Boy**

My mother bore me in the southern wild  
 And I am black, but oh, my soul is white!  
 White as an angel is the English child,  
 But I am black, as if bereaved of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree, 5  
 And sitting down before the heat of day,  
 She took me on her lap and kissed me,  
 And pointing to the east began to say,

'Look on the rising sun: there God does live,  
 And gives his light, and gives his heat away; 10  
 And flowers and trees and beasts and men receive  
 Comfort in morning, joy in the noonday.

And we are put on earth a little space  
 That we may learn to bear the beams of love;  
 And these black bodies and this sunburnt face 15  
 Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

For when our souls have learned the heat to bear  
 The cloud will vanish; we shall hear his voice  
 Saying, "Come out from the grove, my love and care,  
 And round my golden tent like lambs rejoice!" 20

Thus did my mother say, and kissed me;  
 And thus I say to little English boy,

When I from black and he from white cloud free,  
And round the tent of God like lambs we joy,

I'll shade him from the heat, till he can bear 25  
To lean in joy upon our Father's knee;  
And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,  
And be like him, and he will then love me.

### **The Blossom**

Merry merry sparrow  
Under leaves so green!  
A happy blossom  
Sees you swift as arrow;  
Seek your cradle narrow 5  
Near my bosom.

Pretty pretty robin  
Under leaves so green!  
A happy blossom  
Hears you sobbing, sobbing, 10  
Pretty pretty robin,  
Near my bosom.

### **The Chimney Sweeper**

When my mother died I was very young,  
And my father sold me while yet my tongue  
Could scarcely cry 'weep weep weep weep!'  
So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head, 5  
That curled like a lamb's back, was shaved; so I said,  
'Hush, Tom! Never mind it, for when your head's bare  
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.'

And so he was quiet, and that very night,  
As Tom was a-sleeping, he had such a sight! 10  
That thousands of sweepers – Dick, Joe, Ned and Jack,  
Were all of them locked up in coffins of black.

And by came an angel who had a bright key,  
And he opened the coffins and set them all free;  
Then down a green plain leaping, laughing they run 15  
And wash in a river, and shine in the sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,  
They rise upon clouds and sport in the wind;  
And the angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,  
He'd have God for his father and never want joy. 20

And so Tom awoke, and we rose in the dark,  
And got with our bags and our brushes to work;  
Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm –  
So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

### **The Little Boy Lost**

'Father, father, where are you going?  
Oh do not walk so fast!  
Speak, father, speak to your little boy  
Or else I shall be lost.'

The night was dark, no father was there, 5  
The child was wet with dew;  
The mire was deep, and the child did weep,  
And away the vapour flew.

### **The Little Boy Found**

The little boy lost in the lonely fen,  
Led by the wand'ring light,  
Began to cry; but God, ever nigh,  
Appeared like his father in white.

He kissed the child, and by the hand led, 5  
And to his mother brought,  
Who in sorrow pale, through the lonely dale  
Her little boy weeping sought.

### **Laughing Song**

When the green woods laugh with the voice of joy,  
And the dimpling stream runs laughing by;  
When the air does laugh with our merry wit,  
And the green hill laughs with the noise of it;

When the meadows laugh with lively green, 5  
And the grasshopper laughs in the merry scene;  
When Mary and Susan and Emily  
With their sweet round mouths sing, 'Ha, ha, he!'

When the painted birds laugh in the shade,  
Where our table with cherries and nuts is spread, 10  
Come live and be merry, and join with me  
To sing the sweet chorus of 'Ha, ha, he!'

## **A Cradle Song**

Sweet dreams, form a shade  
O'er my lovely infant's head;  
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams  
By happy, silent, moony beams.

Sweet sleep, with soft down 5  
Weave thy brows an infant crown;  
Sweet sleep, angel mild,  
Hover o'er my happy child.

Sweet smiles in the night  
Hover over my delight; 10  
Sweet smiles, mother's smiles,  
All the livelong night beguiles.

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,  
Chase not slumber from thy eyes;  
Sweet moans, sweeter smiles, 15  
All the dovelike moans beguiles.

Sleep, sleep, happy child,  
All creation slept and smiled;  
Sleep, sleep, happy sleep,  
While o'er thee thy mother weep. 20

Sweet babe, in thy face  
Holy image I can trace;  
Sweet babe, once like thee,  
Thy maker lay and wept for me,

Wept for me, for thee, for all, 25  
When he was an infant small;  
Thou his image ever see,  
Heavenly face that smiles on thee –

Smiles on thee, on me, on all,  
Who became an infant small: 30  
Infant smiles are his own smiles;  
Heaven and earth to peace beguiles.



## Night

The sun descending in the west,  
The evening star does shine;  
The birds are silent in their nest  
And I must seek for mine. 5  
The moon like a flower  
In heaven's high bower,  
With silent delight  
Sits and smiles on the night.

Farewell, green fields and happy groves,  
Where flocks have took delight; 10  
Where lambs have nibbled, silent moves  
The feet of angels bright;  
Unseen they pour blessing  
And joy without ceasing 15  
On each bud and blossom  
And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest  
Where birds are covered warm,  
They visit caves of every beast  
To keep them all from harm. 20  
If they see any weeping  
That should have been sleeping,  
They pour sleep on their head  
And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tigers howl for prey 25  
They pitying stand and weep,  
Seeking to drive their thirst away  
And keep them from the sheep;  
But if they rush dreadful,  
The angels most heedful 30  
Receive each mild spirit,  
New worlds to inherit.

And there the lion's ruddy eyes  
Shall flow with tears of gold,  
And pitying the tender cries, 35  
And walking round the fold,  
Saying, 'Wrath, by his meekness,  
And by his health, sickness

Is driven away  
From our immortal day. 40

And now beside thee, bleating lamb,  
I can lie down and sleep,  
Or think on him who bore thy name,  
Graze after thee and weep. 45  
For, washed in life's river,  
My bright mane for ever  
Shall shine like the gold  
As I guard o'er the fold.'

## Spring

Sound the flute!  
Now it's mute.  
Birds delight  
Day and night;  
Nightingale 5  
In the dale,  
Lark in sky,  
Merrily  
Merrily, merrily, to welcome in the year.

Little boy 10  
Full of joy;  
Little girl  
Sweet and small;  
Cock does crow,  
So do you; 15  
Merry voice,  
Infant noise –  
Merrily, merrily, to welcome in the year.

Little lamb  
Here I am, 20  
Come and lick  
My white neck!  
Let me pull  
Your soft wool,  
Let me kiss 25  
Your soft face;  
Merrily, merrily, we welcome in the year.

## **Nurse's Song**

When the voices of children are heard on the green  
And laughing is heard on the hill,  
My heart is at rest within my breast  
And everything else is still.

'Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down      5  
And the dews of night arise;  
Come, come, leave off play, and let us away  
Till the morning appears in the skies.'

'No, no! Let us play, for it is yet day  
And we cannot go to sleep;      10  
Besides, in the sky, the little birds fly  
And the hills are all covered with sheep.'

'Well, well, go and play till the light fades away  
And then go home to bed.'  
The little ones leaped and shouted and laughed      15  
And all the hills echoed.

## **Infant Joy**

'I have no name,  
I am but two days old.'  
What shall I call thee?  
'I happy am,  
Joy is my name.'  
Sweet joy befall thee!      5

Pretty joy!  
Sweet joy but two days old,  
Sweet joy I call thee;  
Thou dost smile,      10  
I sing the while,  
Sweet joy befall thee!

## **A Dream**

Once a dream did weave a shade  
O'er my angel-guarded bed,  
That an emmet lost its way  
Where on grass methought I lay.

Troubled, wildered, and forlorn, 5  
 Dark, benighted, travel-worn,  
 Over many a tangled spray,  
 All heart-broke I heard her say,

‘Oh my children! Do they cry?  
 Do they hear their father sigh? 10  
 Now they look abroad to see;  
 Now return and weep for me.’

Pitying, I dropped a tear;  
 But I saw a glow-worm near  
 Who replied, ‘What wailing wight 15  
 Calls the watchman of the night?’

I am set to light the ground  
 While the beetle goes his round;  
 Follow now the beetle’s hum –  
 Little wanderer, hie thee home.’ 20

### **On Another’s Sorrow**

Can I see another’s woe  
 And not be in sorrow too?  
 Can I see another’s grief  
 And not seek for kind relief?

Can I see a falling tear 5  
 And not feel my sorrow’s share?  
 Can a father see his child  
 Weep, nor be with sorrow filled?

Can a mother sit and hear  
 An infant groan, an infant fear? 10  
 No, no! never can it be!  
 Never, never can it be!

And can He who smiles on all,  
 Hear the wren with sorrows small,  
 Hear the small bird’s grief and care, 15  
 Hear the woes that infants bear –

And not sit beside the nest  
 Pouring pity in their breast?  
 And not sit the cradle near  
 Weeping tear on infant’s tear? 20

And not sit both night and day  
Wiping all our tears away?  
Oh no! never can it be!  
Never, never can it be!

He doth give his joy to all, 25  
He becomes an infant small;  
He becomes a man of woe,  
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh  
And thy maker is not by; 30  
Think not thou canst weep a tear  
And thy maker is not near.

Oh! he gives to us his joy  
That our grief he may destroy;  
Till our grief is fled and gone 35  
He doth sit by us and moan.

## *SONGS OF EXPERIENCE*

### **Introduction**

Hear the voice of the bard!  
Who present, past and future sees;  
Whose ears have heard  
The Holy Word  
That walked among the ancient trees 5

Calling the lapsed soul,  
And weeping in the evening dew;  
That might control  
The starry pole,  
And fallen, fallen light renew! 10

'Oh Earth, oh Earth, return!  
Arise from out the dewy grass;  
Night is worn,  
And the morn  
Rises from the slumberous mass. 15

Turn away no more!  
Why wilt thou turn away?  
The starry floor,  
The wat'ry shore,  
Is giv'n thee till the break of day.' 20

## Earth's Answer

Earth raised up her head  
From the darkness, dread and drear;  
Her light fled,  
Stony dread!  
And her locks covered with grey despair. 5

'Prisoned on wat'ry shore,  
Starry Jealousy does keep my den;  
Cold and hoar,  
Weeping o'er,  
I hear the father of the ancient men. 10

Selfish father of men!  
Cruel, jealous, selfish fear!  
Can delight  
Chained in night  
The virgins of youth and morning bear? 15

Does spring hide its joy  
When buds and blossoms grow?  
Does the sower  
Sow by night,  
Or the ploughman in darkness plough? 20

Break this heavy chain  
That does freeze my bones around! –  
Selfish, vain,  
Eternal bane!  
That free love with bondage bound.' 25

## The Clod and the Pebble

'Love seeketh not itself to please  
Nor for itself hath any care;  
But for another gives its ease  
And builds a heaven in hell's despair.'

So sung a little clod of clay 5  
Trodden with the cattle's feet,  
But a pebble of the brook  
Warbled out these metres meet:

'Love seeketh only self to please,  
To bind another to its delight; 10

Joys in another's loss of ease,  
And builds a hell in heaven's despite.'

### **Holy Thursday**

Is this a holy thing to see  
In a rich and fruitful land?  
Babes reduced to misery,  
Fed with cold and usurous hand?

Is that trembling cry a song? 5  
Can it be a song of joy?  
And so many children poor?  
It is a land of poverty!

And their sun does never shine,  
And their fields are bleak and bare, 10  
And their ways are filled with thorns –  
It is eternal winter there.

For where'er the sun does shine  
And where'er the rain does fall,  
Babe can never hunger there, 15  
Nor poverty the mind appal.

### **The Little Girl Lost**

In futurity  
I prophetic see  
That the earth from sleep  
(Grave the sentence deep)

Shall arise and seek 5  
For her maker meek,  
And the desert wild  
Become a garden mild.

In the southern clime,  
Where the summer's prime 10  
Never fades away,  
Lovely Lyca lay.

Seven summers old  
Lovely Lyca told;  
She had wandered long 15  
Hearing wild birds' song.

'Sweet sleep, come to me  
Underneath this tree;  
Do father, mother weep?  
Where can Lyca sleep? 20

Lost in desert wild  
Is your little child;  
How can Lyca sleep  
If her mother weep?

If her heart does ache 25  
Then let Lyca wake;  
If my mother sleep  
Lyca shall not weep.

Frowning, frowning night,  
O'er this desert bright, 30  
Let thy moon arise  
While I close my eyes.'

Sleeping Lyca lay  
While the beasts of prey,  
Come from caverns deep, 35  
Viewed the maid asleep.

The kingly lion stood  
And the virgin viewed,  
Then he gambolled round  
O'er the hallowed ground. 40

Leopards, tigers play  
Round her as she lay,  
While the lion old  
Bowed his mane of gold

And her bosom lick, 45  
And upon her neck  
From his eyes of flame  
Ruby tears there came;

While the lioness  
Loosed her slender dress, 50  
And naked they conveyed  
To caves the sleeping maid.

## **The Little Girl Found**

All the night in woe  
Lyca's parents go;  
Over valleys deep,  
While the deserts weep.

Tired and woe-begone, 5  
Hoarse with making moan,  
Arm in arm seven days  
They traced the desert ways.

Seven nights they sleep 10  
Among shadows deep,  
And dream they see their child  
Starved in desert wild.

Pale through pathless ways  
The fancied image strays –  
Famished, weeping, weak, 15  
With hollow piteous shriek.

Rising from unrest,  
The trembling woman pressed  
With feet of weary woe;  
She could no further go. 20

In his arms he bore  
Her, armed with sorrow sore;  
Till before their way  
A couching lion lay.

Turning back was vain; 25  
Soon his heavy mane  
Bore them to the ground:  
Then he stalked around

Smelling to his prey.  
But their fears allay 30  
When he licks their hands,  
And silent by them stands.

They look upon his eyes  
Filled with deep surprise,  
And wondering behold 35  
A spirit armed in gold.

On his head a crown,  
On his shoulders down  
Flowed his golden hair;  
Gone was all their care. 40

‘Follow me’, he said,  
‘Weep not for the maid;  
In my palace deep  
Lyca lies asleep.’

Then they followed 45  
Where the vision led,  
And saw their sleeping child  
Among tigers wild.

To this day they dwell 50  
In a lonely dell;  
Nor fear the wolvish howl,  
Nor the lion’s growl.

### **The Chimney Sweeper**

A little black thing among the snow,  
Crying ‘weep weep’ in notes of woe;  
‘Where are thy father and mother, say?’  
‘They are both gone up to the church to pray.

Because I was happy upon the heath 5  
And smiled among the winter’s snow,  
They clothed me in the clothes of death,  
And taught me to sing the notes of woe.

And because I am happy and dance and sing,  
They think they have done me no injury, 10  
And are gone to praise God and his priest and king,  
Who make up a heaven of our misery.’

### **Nurse’s Song**

When the voices of children are heard on the green  
And whisp’ rings are in the dale,  
The days of my youth rise fresh in my mind,  
My face turns green and pale.

Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down, 5  
And the dews of night arise;  
Your spring and your day are wasted in play,  
And your winter and night in disguise.

### **The Sick Rose**

Oh rose, thou art sick;  
The invisible worm  
That flies in the night  
In the howling storm

Has found out thy bed 5  
Of crimson joy,  
And his dark secret love  
Does thy life destroy.

### **The Fly**

Little fly,  
Thy summer's play  
My thoughtless hand  
Has brushed away.

Am not I 5  
A fly like thee?  
Or art not thou  
A man like me?

For I dance 10  
And drink and sing  
Till some blind hand  
Shall brush my wing.

If thought is life  
And strength and breath,  
And the want 15  
Of thought is death,

Then am I  
A happy fly,  
If I live  
Or if I die. 20

## The Angel

I dreamt a dream! What can it mean?  
And that I was a maiden queen  
Guarded by an angel mild:  
Witless woe was ne'er beguiled!

And I wept both night and day, 5  
And he wiped my tears away,  
And I wept both day and night,  
And hid from him my heart's delight.

So he took his wings and fled,  
Then the morn blushed rosy red; 10  
I dried my tears, and armed my fears  
With ten thousand shields and spears.

Soon my angel came again:  
I was armed, he came in vain –  
For the time of youth was fled, 15  
And grey hairs were on my head

## The Tyger

Tyger, tyger, burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies 5  
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?  
On what wings dare he aspire?  
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder and what art  
Could twist the sinews of thy heart? 10  
And when thy heart began to beat,  
What dread hand and what dread feet?

What the hammer? What the chain?  
In what furnace was thy brain?  
What the anvil? What dread grasp 15  
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears  
And watered heaven with their tears,  
Did he smile his work to see?  
Did he who made the lamb make thee? 20

Tyger, tyger, burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

### **My Pretty Rose-Tree**

A flower was offered to me,  
Such a flower as May never bore;  
But I said, 'I've a pretty rose-tree',  
And I passed the sweet flower o'er.

Then I went to my pretty rose-tree 5  
To tend her by day and by night;  
But my rose turned away with jealousy  
And her thorns were my only delight.

### **Ah, Sunflower!**

Ah, sunflower! weary of time,  
Who countest the steps of the sun,  
Seeking after that sweet golden clime  
Where the traveller's journey is done;

Where the youth pined away with desire, 5  
And the pale virgin shrouded in snow,  
Arise from their graves and aspire  
Where my sunflower wishes to go.

### **The Lily**

The modest rose puts forth a thorn,  
The humble sheep a threat'ning horn;  
While the lily white shall in love delight,  
Nor a thorn nor a threat stain her beauty bright.

### **The Garden of Love**

I went to the Garden of Love  
And saw what I never had seen:  
A chapel was built in the midst  
Where I used to play on the green.

And the gates of this chapel were shut, 5  
And 'Thou shalt not' writ over the door;

So I turned to the Garden of Love  
That so many sweet flowers bore,  
  
And I saw it was filled with graves  
And tombstones where flowers should be;           10  
And priests in black gowns were walking their rounds,  
And binding with briars my joys and desires.

### **The Little Vagabond**

Dear mother, dear mother, the church is cold  
But the alehouse is healthy and pleasant and warm;  
Besides I can tell where I am used well –  
Such usage in heaven will never do well.  
  
But if at the church they would give us some ale,           5  
And a pleasant fire our souls to regale,  
We'd sing and we'd pray all the livelong day,  
Nor ever once wish from the church to stray.  
  
Then the parson might preach and drink and sing,  
And we'd be as happy as birds in the spring;           10  
And modest Dame Lurch, who is always at church,  
Would not have bandy children nor fasting nor birch.  
  
And God, like a father rejoicing to see  
His children as pleasant and happy as he,  
Would have no more quarrel with the devil or the barrel,   15  
But kiss him and give him both drink and apparel.

### **London**

I wander through each chartered street  
Near where the chartered Thames does flow,  
And mark in every face I meet  
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.  
  
In every cry of every man,           5  
In every infant's cry of fear,  
In every voice, in every ban,  
The mind-forged manacles I hear.  
  
How the chimney-sweeper's cry  
Every black'ning church appals,           10  
And the hapless soldier's sigh  
Runs in blood down palace walls.

But most through midnight streets I hear  
How the youthful harlot's curse  
Blasts the new born infant's tear, 15  
And blights with plagues the marriage hearse.

### **The Human Abstract**

Pity would be no more  
If we did not make somebody poor;  
And mercy no more could be,  
If all were as happy as we.

And mutual fear brings peace 5  
Till the selfish loves increase;  
Then Cruelty knits a snare  
And spreads his baits with care.

He sits down with holy fears  
And waters the ground with tears; 10  
Then humility takes its root  
Underneath his foot.

Soon spreads the dismal shade  
Of mystery over his head,  
And the caterpillar and fly 15  
Feed on the mystery.

And it bears the fruit of deceit,  
Ruddy and sweet to eat;  
And the raven his nest has made  
In its thickest shade. 20

The gods of the earth and sea  
Sought through nature to find this tree,  
But their search was all in vain –  
There grows one in the human brain.

### **Infant Sorrow**

My mother groaned, my father wept!  
Into the dangerous world I leapt:  
Helpless, naked, piping loud  
Like a fiend hid in a cloud.

Struggling in my father's hands, 5  
Striving against my swaddling bands,

Bound and weary I thought best  
To sulk upon my mother's breast.

### **A Poison Tree**

I was angry with my friend;  
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.  
I was angry with my foe;  
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I watered it in fears, 5  
Night and morning with my tears;  
And I sunned it with smiles,  
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night 10  
Till it bore an apple bright;  
And my foe beheld it shine,  
And he knew that it was mine.

And into my garden stole  
When the night had veiled the pole –  
In the morning glad I see 15  
My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

### **A Little Boy Lost**

'Nought loves another as itself,  
Nor venerates another so,  
Nor is it possible to thought  
A greater than itself to know.

And, father, how can I love you 5  
Or any of my brothers more?  
I love you like the little bird  
That picks up crumbs around the door.'

The priest sat by and heard the child,  
In trembling zeal he seized his hair; 10  
He led him by his little coat  
And all admired the priestly care.

And standing on the altar high,  
'Lo, what a fiend is here!' said he,  
'One who sets reason up for judge 15  
Of our most holy mystery.'

The weeping child could not be heard,  
The weeping parents wept in vain;  
They stripped him to his little shirt  
And bound him in an iron chain, 20

And burned him in a holy place  
Where many had been burned before.  
The weeping parents wept in vain –  
Are such things done on Albion's shore?

## A Little Girl Lost

*Children of the future age  
Reading this indignant page,  
Know that in a former time  
Love! sweet Love! was thought a crime.*

In the age of gold, 5  
Free from winter's cold,  
Youth and maiden bright  
To the holy light,  
Naked in the sunny beams delight.

Once a youthful pair 10  
Filled with softest care  
Met in garden bright  
Where the holy light  
Had just removed the curtains of the night.

There in rising day 15  
On the grass they play;  
Parents were afar,  
Strangers came not near,  
And the maiden soon forgot her fear.

Tired with kisses sweet, 20  
They agree to meet  
When the silent sleep  
Waves o'er heavens deep,  
And the weary tired wanderers weep.

To her father white 25  
Came the maiden bright,  
But his loving look,  
Like the holy book  
All her tender limbs with terror shook.

‘Ona, pale and weak, 30  
 To thy father speak! –  
 Oh, the trembling fear!  
 Oh, the dismal care  
 That shakes the blossoms of my hoary hair!’

### To Tirzah

Whate’er is born of mortal birth  
 Must be consumed with the earth  
 To rise from generation free;  
 Then what have I to do with thee?

The sexes sprung from shame and pride – 5  
 Blowed in the morn, in evening died;  
 But mercy changed death into sleep –  
 The sexes rose to work and weep.

Thou mother of my mortal part,  
 With cruelty didst mould my heart 10  
 And with false self-deceiving tears  
 Didst bind my nostrils, eyes and ears;

Didst close my tongue in senseless clay  
 And me to mortal life betray:  
 The death of Jesus set me free – 15  
 Then what have I to do with thee?

It is raised  
 a spiritual body

### The Schoolboy

I love to rise in a summer morn  
 When the birds sing on every tree;  
 The distant huntsman winds his horn,  
 And the skylark sings with me – 5  
 Oh, what sweet company!

But to go to school in a summer morn,  
 Oh, it drives all joy away;  
 Under a cruel eye outworn,  
 The little ones spend the day  
 In sighing and dismay. 10

Ah! then at times I drooping sit  
 And spend many an anxious hour;  
 Nor in my book can I take delight,

Nor sit in learning's bower,  
Worn through with the dreary shower. 15

How can the bird that is born for joy  
Sit in a cage and sing?  
How can a child, when fears annoy,  
But droop his tender wing  
And forget his youthful spring? 20

Oh, father and mother, if buds are nipped  
And blossoms blown away,  
And if the tender plants are stripped  
Of their joy in the springing day  
By sorrow and care's dismay, 25

How shall the summer arise in joy  
Or the summer fruits appear?  
Or how shall we gather what griefs destroy,  
Or bless the mellowing year  
When the blasts of winter appear? 30

## **The Voice of the Ancient Bard**

Youth of delight, come hither  
And see the opening morn –  
Image of truth new-born;  
Doubt is fled, and clouds of reason,  
Dark disputes and artful teasing. 5  
Folly is an endless maze,  
Tangled roots perplex her ways –  
How many have fallen there!  
They stumble all night over bones of the dead,  
And feel they know not what but care, 10  
And wish to lead others, when they should be led.

## **A Divine Image**

Cruelty has a human heart  
And jealousy a human face;  
Terror the human form divine,  
And secrecy the human dress.  
  
The human dress is forged iron, 5  
The human form a fiery forge,  
The human face a furnace sealed,  
The human heart its hungry gorge.