

1803

AUGURIES OF INNOCENCE

William Blake

Blake, William (1757-1827) - English poet, engraver, and mystic who illustrated his own works. A rare genius, he created some of the purest lyrics in the English language. Blake believed himself to be guided by visions from the spiritual world; he died singing of the glories of heaven. Auguries of Innocence (1803) - Opening lines: To see a World in a Grain of Sand / And a Heaven in a Wild Flower...

AUGURIES OF INNOCENCE

To see a World in a Grain of Sand
 And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,
 Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
 And Eternity in an hour.

A Robin Red breast in a Cage
 Puts all Heaven in a Rage.
 A dove house fill'd with doves & Pigeons
 Shudders Hell thro' all its regions.

A dog starv'd at his Master's Gate
 Predicts the ruin of the State.
 A Horse misus'd upon the Road
 Calls to Heaven for Human blood.

Each outcry of the hunted Hare
 A fibre from the Brain does tear.
 A Skylark wounded in the wing,
 A Cherubim does cease to sing.

The Game Cock clip'd & arm'd for fight
 Does the Rising Sun affright.
 Every Wolf's & Lion's howl
 Raises from Hell a Human Soul.

The wild deer, wand'ring her & there,
 Keeps the Human Soul from Care.
 The Lamb misus'd breeds Public strife
 And yet forgives the Butcher's Knife.

The Bat that flits at close of Eve
 Has left the Brain that won't Believe.
 The Owl that calls upon the Night
 Speaks the Unbeliever's fright.

He who shall hurt the little Wren
 Shall never be belov'd by Men.
 He who the Ox to wrath has mov'd
 Shall never be by Woman lov'd.
 The wanton Boy that kills the Fly
 Shall feel the Spider's enmity.

He who torments the Chafer's sprite
Weaves a Bower in endless Night.

The Caterpillar on the Leaf
Repeats to thee thy Mother's grief.
Kill not the Moth nor Butterfly,
For the Last Judgment draweth nigh.

He who shall train the Horse to War
Shall never pass the Polar Bar.
The Beggar's Dog & Widow's Cat,
Feed them & thou wilt grow fat.

The Gnat that sings his Summer's song
Poison gets from Slander's tongue.
The poison of the Snake & Newt
Is the sweat of Envy's Foot.

The Poison of the Honey Bee
Is the Artist's Jealousy.
The Prince's Robes & Beggar's Rags
Are Toadstools on the Miser's Bags.

A truth that's told with bad intent
Beats all the Lies you can invent.
It is right it should be so;
Man was made for Joy & Woe;

And when this we rightly know
Thro' the World we safely go,
Joy & Woe are woven fine,
A Clothing for the Soul divine;

Under every grief & pine
Runs a joy with silken twine.
The Babe is more than swadling Bands;
Throughout all these Human Lands

Tools were made, & Born were hands,
Every Farmer Understands.
Every Tear from Every Eye
Becomes a Babe in Eternity;
This is caught by Females bright

And return'd to its own delight.
 The Bleat, the Bark, Bellow & Roar
 Are Waves that Beat on Heaven's Shore.

The Babe that weeps the Rod beneath
 Writes Revenge in realms of death.
 The Beggar's Rags, fluttering in Air,
 Does to Rags the Heavens tear.

The Soldier, arm'd with Sword & Gun,
 Palsied strikes the Summer's Sun.
 The poor Man's Farthing is worth more
 Than all the Gold on Afric's Shore.

One Mite wrung from the Labrer's hands
 Shall buy & sell the Miser's Lands:
 Or, if protected from on high,
 Does the whole Nation sell & buy.

He who mocks the Infant's Faith
 Shall be mock'd in Age & Death.
 He who shall teach the Child to Doubt
 The rotting Grave shall ne'er get out.

He who respects the Infant's faith
 Triumphs over Hell & Death.
 The Child's Toys & the Old Man's Reasons
 Are the Fruits of the Two seasons.

The Questioner, who sits so sly,
 Shall never know how to Reply.
 He who replies to words of Doubt
 Doth put the Light of Knowledge out.

The Strongest Poison ever known
 Came from Caesar's Laurel Crown.
 Nought can deform the Human Race
 Like to the Armour's iron brace.

When Gold & Gems adorn the Plow
 To peaceful Arts shall Envy Bow.
 A Riddle or the Cricket's Cry
 Is to Doubt a fit Reply.

The Emmet's Inch & Eagle's Mile
 Make Lame Philosophy to smile.
 He who Doubts from what he sees
 Will ne'er Believe, do what you Please.

If the Sun & Moon should doubt,
 They'd immediately Go out.
 To be in a Passion you Good may do,
 But no Good if a Passion is in you.

The Whore & Gambler, by the State
 Licenc'd, build that Nation's Fate.
 The Harlot's cry from Street to Street
 Shall weave old England's winding Sheet.

The Winners Shout, the Loser's Curse,
 Dance before dead England's Hearse.
 Every Night & every Morn
 Some to Misery are Born.

Every Morn & every Night
 Some are Born to sweet delight.
 Some are Born to sweet delight,
 Some are Born to Endless Night.

We are led to Believe a Lie
 When we see not Thro' the Eye
 Which was Born in a Night to perish in a Night
 When the Soul Slept in Beams of Light.

God Appears & God is Light
 To those poor Souls who dwell in Night,
 But does a Human Form Display
 To those who Dwell in Realms of day.

THE END