

The Ecchoing Green

The Sun does arise,
 And make happy the skies.
 The merry bells ring
 To welcome the Spring.
 5 The sky-lark and thrush,
 The birds of the bush,
 Sing louder around,
 To the bells' chearful sound.
 While our sports shall be seen
 10 On the Ecchoing Green.

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

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

1789

The Lamb¹

Little Lamb, who made thee?
 Dost thou know who made thee?
 Gave thee life & bid thee feed,
 By the stream & o'er the mead;
 5 Gave thee clothing of delight,
 Softest clothing wooly bright;
 Gave thee such a tender voice,
 Making all the vales rejoice!
 Little Lamb who made thee?
 10 Dost thou know who made thee?

1. The opening of this poem mimes the form of the catechistic questions and answers customarily used for children's religious instruction.

Little Lamb I'll tell thee,
 Little Lamb I'll tell thee!
 He is callèd by thy name,
 For he calls himself a Lamb;
 15 He is meek & he is mild,
 He became a little child;
 I a child & thou a lamb,
 We are callèd by his name.
 Little Lamb God bless thee.
 20 Little Lamb God bless thee.

1789

The Little Black Boy

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

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

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

15 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 sun-burnt face
 Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

20 For when our souls have learn'd the heat to bear,
 The cloud will vanish; we shall hear his voice,
 Saying: Come out from the grove, my love & care,
 And round my golden tent like lambs rejoice.

Thus did my mother say, and kissèd 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,

25 I'll shade him from the heat till he can bear
 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.

1789

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

Well, well, go & play till the light fades away
 And then go home to bed.
 15 The little ones leaped & shouted & laugh'd
 And all the hills ecchoèd.

ca. 1784

1789

Infant Joy

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

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

1789

On Anothers Sorrow

Can I see anothers woe,
 And not be in sorrow too.
 Can I see anothers grief,
 And not seek for kind relief.

5 Can I see a falling tear,
 And not feel my sorrows share,
 Can a father see his child,
 Weep, nor be with sorrow fill'd.

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

And can he who smiles on all
 Hear the wren with sorrows small,



"The Tyger," *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, plate 52, copy C, ca. 1801.

The Tyger¹

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

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

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

1. For the author's revisions while composing "The Tyger," see "Poems in Process," in the NAEL Archive.

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

When the stars threw down their spears²
 And water'd heaven with their tears,
 Did he smile his work to see?
 20 Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

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

1790-92

1794

My Pretty Rose Tree

A flower was offerd 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.

5 Then I went to my Pretty Rose-tree,
 To tend her by day and by night.
 But my Rose turnd away with jealousy,
 And her thorns were my only delight.

1794

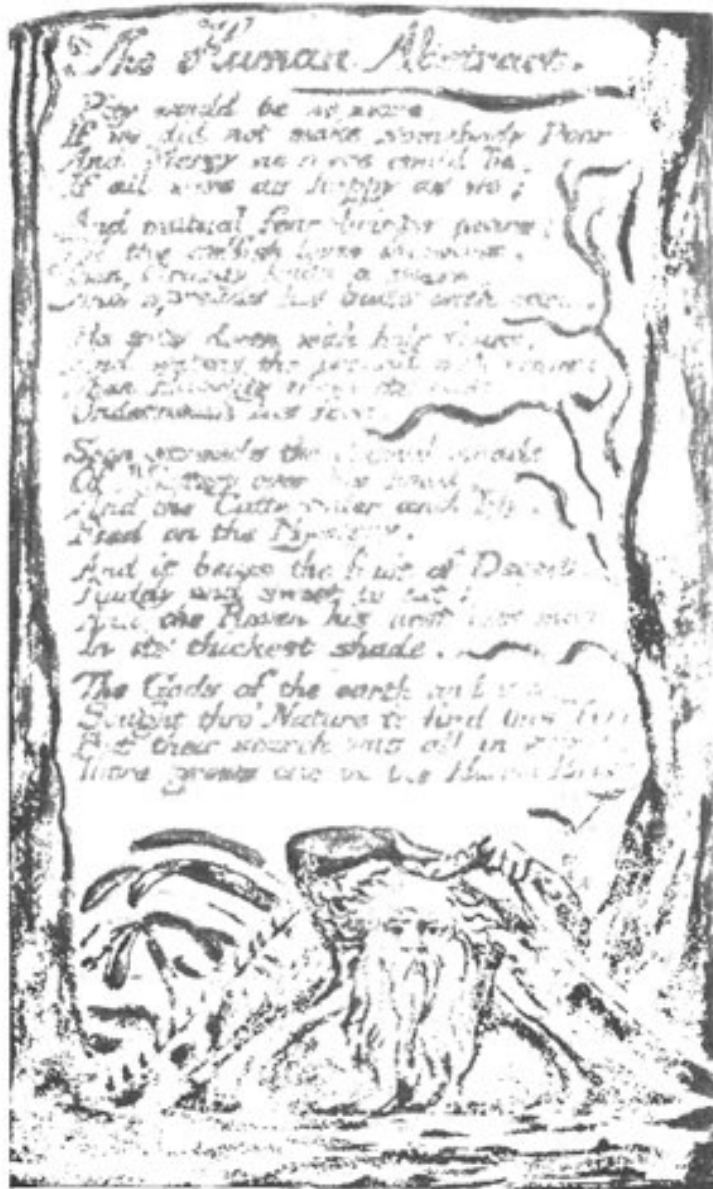
Ah! Sun-flower

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

5 Where the Youth pined away with desire,
 And the pale Virgin shrouded in snow,
 Arise from their graves and aspire,
 Where my Sun-flower wishes to go.

1794

2. "Threw down" is ambiguous and may signify that the stars either "surrendered" or "hurled down" their spears.



"The Human Abstract," *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, plate 47, copy Y, 1825.

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

The Gods of the earth and sea,
Sought thro' Nature to find this Tree,
But their search was all in vain:
There grows one in the Human Brain.

1790-92

1794

Infant Sorrow

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

5 Struggling in my father's hands,
Striving against my swadling bands;
Bound and weary I thought best
To sulk upon my mother's breast.

1794

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.

5 And I waterd it in fears,
Night & morning with my tears;
And I sunnèd it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.

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

15 And into my garden stole,
When the night had veild the pole;
In the morning glad I see
My foe outstretchd beneath the tree.

1794

To Tirzah¹

Whate'er is Born of Mortal Birth
Must be consumèd with the Earth
To rise from Generation free;
Then what have I to do with thee?²

5 The Sexes sprung from Shame & Pride,
Blow'd^o in the morn, in evening died;
But Mercy changd Death into Sleep;
The Sexes rose to work & weep.

blossomed

10 Thou, Mother of my Mortal part,
With cruelty didst mould my Heart,
And with false self-deceiving tears
Didst bind my Nostrils, Eyes, & Ears.

Didst close my Tongue in senseless clay
And me to Mortal Life betray.

1. Tirzah was the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel and is conceived by Blake in opposition to Jerusalem, capital of the southern kingdom of Judah, whose tribes had been redeemed from captivity. In this poem, which was added to late versions of *Songs of Experience*, Tirzah is repre-

sented as the mother—in the realm of material nature and "Generation"—of the mortal body with its restrictive senses.

2. Echoing the words of Christ to his mother at the marriage in Cana, John 2.4: "Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come"