

## William Blake

### Auguries of Innocence

(excerpt)



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 redbreast in a cage  
Puts all Heaven in a rage.  
A dove house fill'd with doves and 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 clipp'd and arm'd for fight  
Does the rising Sun affright.  
Every wolf's and lion's howl  
Raises from Hell a human soul.

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He who respects the infant's faith  
Triumphs over Hell and Death.  
The child's toys and 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 and 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 and 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 and 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 and gambler, by the state  
Licens'd, build that nation's fate.  
The harlot's cry from street to street,  
Shall weave Old England's winding sheet.  
The winner's shout, the loser's curse,  
Dance before dead England's hearse.  
Every night and every morn  
Some to misery are born.  
Every morn and 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 and 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.

Note: Blake probably wrote this poem during the period from 1800 – 1803.