

Joan Baez

"London"

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William Blake

published in Songs of Experience in 1794.

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,
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 blackening church appals,
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,
And blights with plagues the marriage-hearse.

I take with me where I go a pen and a golden bowl
Poet and beggar step in my shoes
or a prince in a purple shawl.
I bring with me when I return to the house,
that my father's hands made
A crooning bird on a crystal bough
And oh, a sad, sad word

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