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Foreword

Inspiration. Where does it come from? Nature, fine arts, music, feelings, emotions, human relationships, ups and downs, triumphs and tragedies, important events and attitude to them.

Admiration. What is it based on? Genius, talent, uniqueness of form and expression, yet universal perception whatever epoch or location, beauty and harmony, preciseness of rhymes and sounds, dedication and determination.

Poetic gems. We are blessed to enjoy the poetic masterpieces of English and American literature as a source of our emotional delight and linguistic advancement. We are thankful to the creators of poetic gems for giving us music to our ears and food for thought. We admire their inspirational power.

In this collection we have compiled the best poems by renowned English, Scottish and American poets William Blake, Robert Burns, William Wordsworth, Percy Bysshe Shelley, John Keats, George Gordon Byron, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Edgar Allan Poe, Emily Elizabeth Dickinson, Robert Louis Stevenson, Ella Wheeler Wilcox, Robert Lee Frost, Oscar Wilde, William Shakespeare, Cecil Frances Alexander, Lewis Carroll, Joseph Rudyard Kipling.

It is a huge honour and privilege for English learners to be able to get acquainted with these poetic treasures, to read, learn and recite them in order to progress in English in the English language classroom and extra-curricular activities.

It's an enormous pleasure for English teachers to incorporate best literary creations of outstanding poets into educational process of teaching pronunciation, to apply these and other poems to classes of Practical Phonetics, to Phonetic Competitions and Phonetic Olympiads, to the workshops for schoolchildren and school teachers.

This book is a tribute to enduring poetic legacy of British and American lyricists, and at the same time, it is a textbook for English learners to master their phonetic, lexical and oratory skills.



William Blake

(1757–1827)



William Blake was an English poet, painter, and printmaker. Largely unrecognized during his lifetime, Blake is now considered a seminal figure in the history of the poetry and visual arts of the Romantic Age. His prophetic works have been said to form “what is in proportion to its merits the least read body of poetry in the English language”. He produced a diverse and symbolically rich works of art, which embraced the imagination as “the body of God” or “human existence itself”.



THE TIGER

Tiger Tiger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry

In what distant deeps or skies.
Burnt the fire of thine eyes!
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand, dare sieze the fire!

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!

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

When the stars threw down their spear
And water'd heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see
Did he who made the Lamb make thee!

Tiger Tiger burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry.

CRADLE SONG

Sleep, sleep, beauty bright,
Dreaming in the joys of night;
Sleep, sleep; in thy sleep
Little sorrows sit and weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face
Soft desires I can trace,
Secret joys and secret smiles,
Little pretty infant wiles.

As thy softest limbs I feel,
Smiles as of the morning steal
O'er thy cheek, and o'er thy breast
Where thy little heart doth rest.

O the cunning wiles that creep
In thy little heart asleep!
When thy little heart doth wake,
Then the dreadful night shall break.

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,
Night and morning with my tears;
And I sunnèd it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.

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,

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

INTRODUCTION

(from " Songs of Innocence")

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

"Pipe a song about a lamb!"
So I piped with 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!"
So I sang the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

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

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

LOVE'S SECRET

Never seek to tell thy love,
Love that never told can be;
For the gentle wind doth move
Silently, invisibly.

I told my love, I told my love,
I told her all my heart,
Trembling, cold, in ghastly fears.
Ah! she did depart!

Soon after she was gone from me,
A traveller came by,
Silently, invisibly:
He took her with a sigh.

TO THE MUSES

Whether on Ida's shady brow
Or in the chambers of the East,
The chambers of the Sun, that now
From ancient melody have ceased;

Whether in heaven ye wander fair,
Or the green corners of the earth,
Or the blue regions of the air
Where the melodious winds have birth;

Whether on crystal rocks ye rove,
Beneath the bosom of the sea,
Wandering in many a coral grove;
Fair Nine, forsaking Poetry;

How have you left the ancient love
That bards of old enjoy'd in you!
The languid strings do scarcely move,
The sound is forced, the notes are few.

THE CHIMNEY SWEEPER

(from "Songs of Innocence")

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,
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! –
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 let them all free;
Then down a green plain, leaping, laughing, they run,
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.

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 CHIMNEY SWEEPER

(from "Songs of Experience")

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,
And smil'd 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,
And are gone to praise God and his Priest and King,
Who make up a heaven of our misery.

HEAR THE VOICE

Hear the voice of the Bard,
Who present, past, and future, sees;
Whose ears have heard
The Holy Word
That walk'd among the ancient trees;

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

'O Earth, O Earth, return!
Arise from out the dewy grass!
Night is worn,
And the morn
Rises from the slumbrous mass.

'Turn away no more;
Why wilt thou turn away?
The starry floor,
The watery shore,
Is given thee till the break of day.

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:
O what sweet company!

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

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.

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!

O 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, -

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?

I HEARD AN ANGEL

I heard an Angel singing
When the day was springing, '
Mercy, Pity, Peace
Is the world's release.'

Thus he sung all day
Over the new mown hay,
Till the sun went down
And haycocks looked brown.

I heard a Devil curse
Over the heath and the furze,
'Mercy could be no more,
If there was nobody poor,

And pity no more could be,
If all were as happy as we.'
At his curse the sun went down,
And the heavens gave a frown.

Down pour'd the heavy rain
Over the new reap'd grain ...
And Miseries' increase
Is Mercy, Pity, Peace.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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