**William Blake (1757-1827)**

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| **The Divine Image, 1789**  **(from *Songs of Innocence*)**  To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love All pray in their distress; And to these virtues of delight Return their thankfulness.  For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love Is God, our Father dear, And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love Is man, His child and care.  For Mercy has a human heart, Pity a human face, And Love, the human form divine, And Peace, the human dress.  Then every man, of every clime, That prays in his distress, Prays to the human form divine, Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.  And all must love the human form, In heathen, Turk, or Jew; Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell There God is dwelling too.  **The Fly, 1794**  **(from *Songs of Experience*)**  Little Fly,  Thy summer's play  My thoughtless hand  Has brushed away.  Am not I  A fly like thee?  Or art not thou  A man like me?  For I dance,  And drink, and sing,  Till some blind hand  Shall brush my wing.  If thought is life  And strength and breath,  And the want  Of thought is death;  Then am I  A happy fly.  If I live,  Or if I die. | **Holy Thursday (from *Songs of Innocence*), ca.1784**   |  | | --- | | 'Twas on a holy Thursday, their innocent faces clean, The children walking two and two in red and blue and green: Grey-headed beadles walked before, with wands as white as snow, Till into the high dome of Paul's they like Thames waters flow.  O what a multitude they seemed, these flowers of London town! Seated in companies they sit, with radiance all their own. The hum of multitudes was there, but multitudes of lambs, Thousands of little boys and girls raising their innocent hands.  Now like a mighty wind they raise to heaven the voice of song, Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of heaven among: Beneath them sit the aged men, wise guardians of the poor. Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door. |   **Nurse’s Song (from *Songs of Experience*), 1794**  When the voices of children are heard on the green And whisp'rings are in the dale, The days of my youth rise fresh in my mind, My face turns green and pale.  Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down, And the dews of night arise; Your spring and your day are wasted in play, And your winter and night in disguise.  **The Book of Thel (IV), 1789-1791** The eternal gates' terrific Porter lifted the northern bar: Thel enter'd in and saw the secrets of the land unknown. She saw the couches of the dead, and where the fibrous roots Of every heart on earth infixes deep its restless twists: A land of sorrows and of tears where never smile was seen.  She wander'd in the land of clouds thro' valleys dark, list'ning Dolours and lamentations; waiting oft beside a dewy grave She stood in silence, list'ning to the voices of the ground, Till to her own grave-plot she came, and there she sat down, And heard this voice of sorrow breathed from the hollow pit.  'Why cannot the Ear be closed to its own destruction? Or the glist'ning Eye to the poison of a smile? Why are Eyelids stor'd with arrows ready drawn, Where a thousand fighting men in ambush lie, Or an Eye of gifts and graces show'rhing fruits and coined gold? Why a Tongue impress'd with honey from every wind? Why an Ear, a whirlpool fierce to draw creations in? Why a Nostril wide inhaling terror, trembling, and affright? Why a tender curb upon the youthful, burning boy? Why a little curtain of flesh on the bed of our desire?'  The Virgin started from her seat, and with a shriek Fled back unhinder'd till she came into the vales of Har. | |
| **Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)**  ***THE RAVEN***  Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, week and weary,  Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore-  While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,  As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.  “'Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber door-  Only this and nothing more.”  Ah, distinctly I remember, it was in the bleak December,  And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.  Eagerly I wished the morrow;-vainly I had sought to borrow  From my books surcease of sorrow - sorrow for the lost Lenore-  For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore-  Nameless here for evermore.  And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain  Thrilled me - filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;  So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating,  “'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door-  Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door; -  This it is and nothing more.”  Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,  “Sir,” said I, “or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;  But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,  And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,  That I scarce was sure I heard you” - here I opened wide the door: -  Darkness there and nothing more. (ca.1845) | | | **Thomas Stearns Eliot (1888-1965)**  **From** ***The Waste Land***, **I. The Burial of the Dead**  April is the cruellest month, breeding Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing  Memory and desire, stirring  Dull roots with spring rain.  Winter kept us warm, covering  Earth in forgetful snow, feeding  A little life with dried tubers.  Summer surprised us, coming over the Starnbergersee  With a shower of rain; we stopped in the colonnade,  And went on in sunlight, into the Hofgarten,  And drank coffee, and talked for an hour.  Bin gar keine Russin, stamm' aus Litauen, echt deutsch.  And when we were children, staying at the archduke's,  My cousin's, he took me out on a sled, And I was frightened. He said, Marie,  Marie, hold on tight. And down we went.  In the mountains, there you feel free.  I read, much of the night, and go south in the winter.   What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,  You cannot say, or guess, for you know only A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,  And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,  And the dry stone no sound of water. Only  There is shadow under this red rock,  (Come in under the shadow of this red rock),  And I will show you something different from either Your shadow at morning striding behind you  Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you;  I will show you fear in a handful of dust. (1922) | |