

London Quotes

Writer: William Blake | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

And mark in every face I meet

Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

Explanation:

The poet sees people's faces as he walks through the streets of London. Every face looks tired, sad, and full of pain. People are unhappy and weak.

In every cry of every Man,

In every Infants cry of fear,

In every voice: in every ban,

The mind-forg'd manacles I hear

Explanation:

The poet hears people crying everywhere. Grown men are crying, and even babies cry in fear. He hears sadness in all voices and all rules or restrictions. He feels that people are not free. They are trapped by invisible chains, created by their own minds and by society.

How the Chimney-sweepers cry...

And the hapless Soldiers sigh

Runs in blood down Palace walls

Explanation:

The poet hears the cries of little boys who clean chimneys. The poet also hears the sad sighs of soldiers who suffer and die. Their blood is like a stain on the walls of the palace. It means the leaders (who live in the palace) are responsible for the soldiers' pain.

But most thro' midnight streets I hear

How the youthful Harlots curse...

And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse

Explanation:

At night, the poet hears young prostitutes shouting and cursing. The poet also says that prostitution brings disease, which ruins marriage. Husbands go to prostitutes and then spread disease to their wives. This makes marriage like a hearse—a vehicle for dead bodies.

LxNotes