

BLAKE AMERICA

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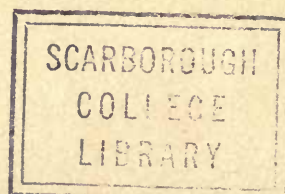
# AMERICA

*a Prophecy*



*As when a dream of Thiralatha flies the midnight hour:  
In vain the dreamer grasps the joyful images, they fly  
Seen in obscured traces in the Vale of Leutha, So  
The British Colonies beneath the woful Princes fade.*

*And so the Princes fade from earth, scarce seen by souls of men  
But tho' obscur'd, this is the form of the Angelic land.*



AMERICA



PROPHECY



LAMBETH

*Printed by William Blake in the year 1793*









# Preludium



The shadowy daughter of Urithona stood before red Orc,  
When fourteen suns had faintly journey'd o'er his dark abode:  
His food she brought in iron baskets, his drink in cups of iron:  
Crown'd with a helmet & dark hair the nameless female stood,  
A quiver with its burning stores, a bow like that of night,  
When pestilence is shot from heaven, no other arms she need:  
Invulnerable tho' naked, sove where clouds roll round her loins,  
Their awful folds in the dark air: silent she stood as night:  
For never from her iron tongue could voice or sound arise:  
But dumb till that dread day when Orc absolv'd his herre embrace

Dark virgin: said the hairy youth, thy father stern abhorrd,  
Rivets my tenfold chains while still on high my spirit soars:  
Sometimes an eagle screaming in the sky, sometimes a lion  
Stalking upon the mountains, & sometimes a whale I lash  
The raging fathomless abyss, anon a serpent folding  
Around the pillars of Urithona, and round thy dark limbs  
On the Canadian wilds I fold, feeble my spirit folds,  
For chain'd beneath I rend these caverns: when thou bringest food  
I howl my joy: and my red eyes seek to behold thy face,  
In vain! these clouds roll to & fro, & hide thee from my sight



Silent as despairing love and strong as jealousy.  
The hairy shoulders rend the links, free are the wrists of fire;  
Round the terrific loins he seized the panting struggling womb;  
It joy'd: she put aside her clouds & smiled her first-born smile:  
As when a black cloud shews its lightnings to the silent deep.

Soon as she saw the terrible boy then burst the virgin cry.

I know thee, I have found thee, & I will not let thee go:  
Thou art the image of God who dwells in darkness of Africa:  
And thou art fallen to give me life in regions of dark death:  
On my American plains I feel the struggling afflictions  
Endured by roots that writhe their arms into the nether deep:  
I see a serpent in Canada, who courts me to his love  
In Mexico an Eagle, and a Lion in Peru:  
I see a Whale in the South-sea, drinking my soul away.  
O what limb rending pains I feel, thy fire & my frost  
Mingle in howling pains, in furrows by thy lightnings rent:  
This is eternal death: and this the torment long foretold.



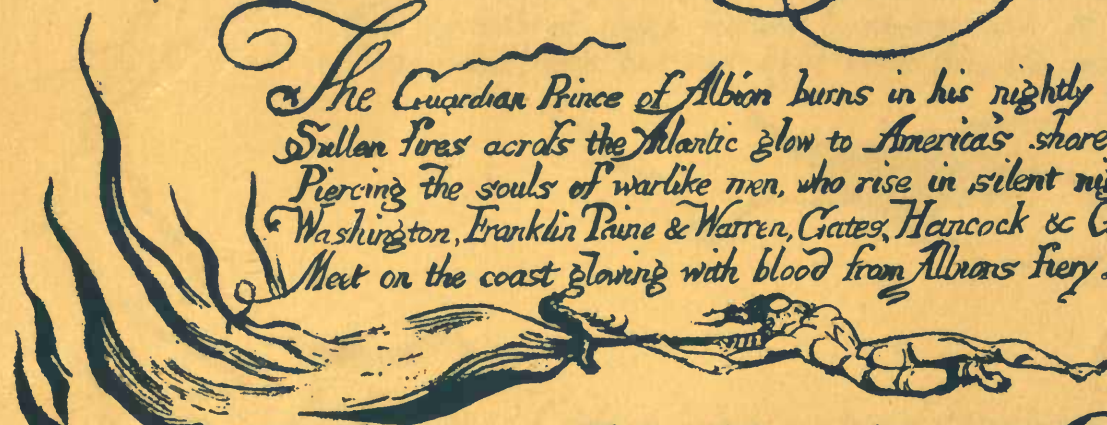





# PROSELY



The Guardian Prince of Albion burns in his nightly tent,  
Sullen fires across the Atlantic glow to America's shore;  
Piercing the souls of warlike men, who rise in silent night,  
Washington, Franklin Paine & Warren, Gates, Hancock & Green;  
Meet on the coast glowing with blood from Albion's fiery Prince.



Washington spoke; Friends of America look over the Atlantic sea:  
A bended bow is lifted in heaven, & a heavy iron chain  
Descends link by link from Albion's cliffs across the sea to bind  
Brothers & sons of America, till our faces pale and yellow;  
Heads deprest, voices weak, eyes downcast, hands work-bruis'd,  
Feet bleeding on the sultry sands, and the furrows of the whip  
Descend to generations that in future times forget.



The strong voice ceased: for a terrible blast swept over the heaving  
The eastern cloud rent: on his cliffs stood Albion's wrathful Prince  
A dragon form clashing his scales at midnight he arose,  
And bound red meteors round the land of Albion beneath,  
His voice, his locks, his awful shoulders, and his glowing eyes,

sea





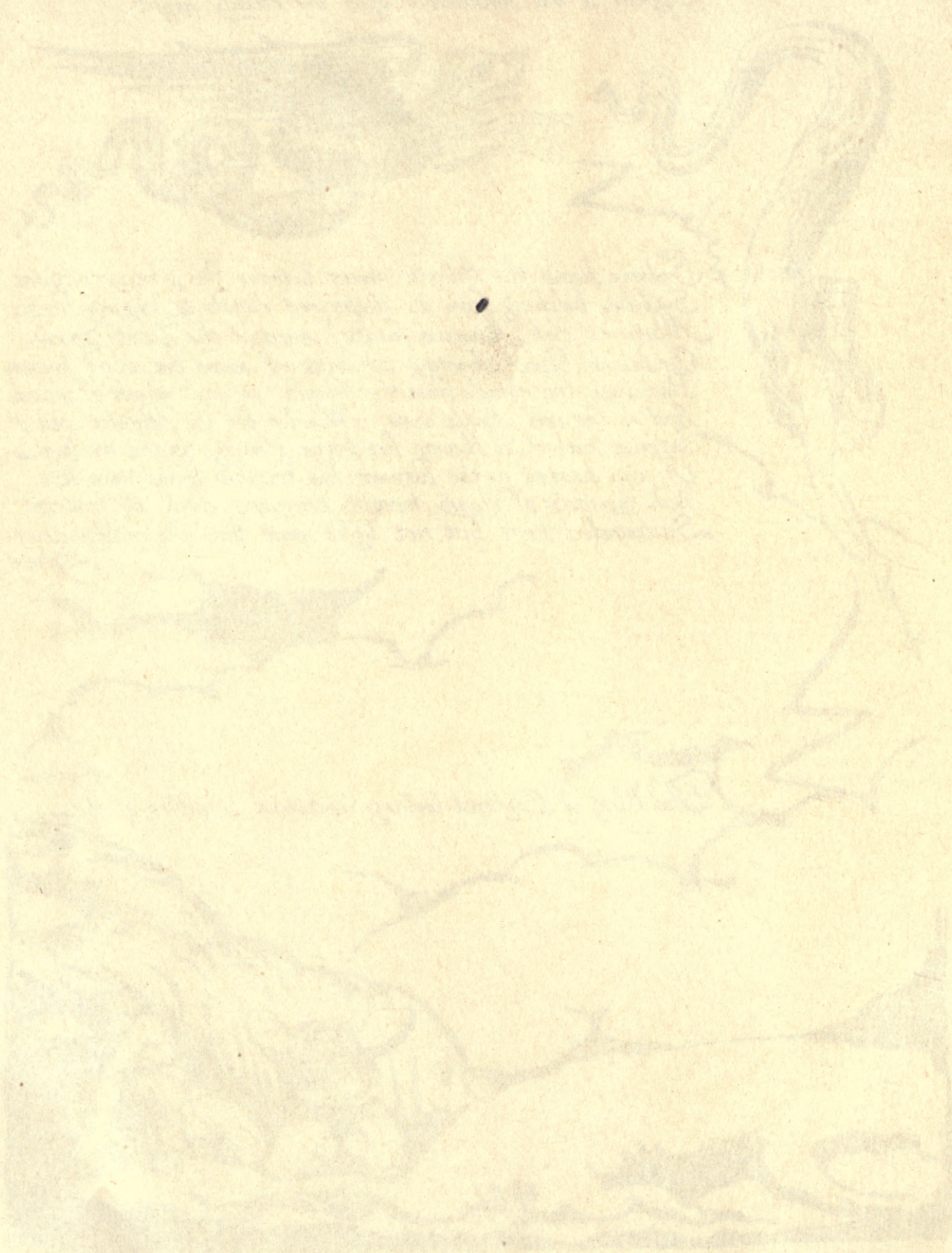
Appear to the Americans upon the cloudy night.

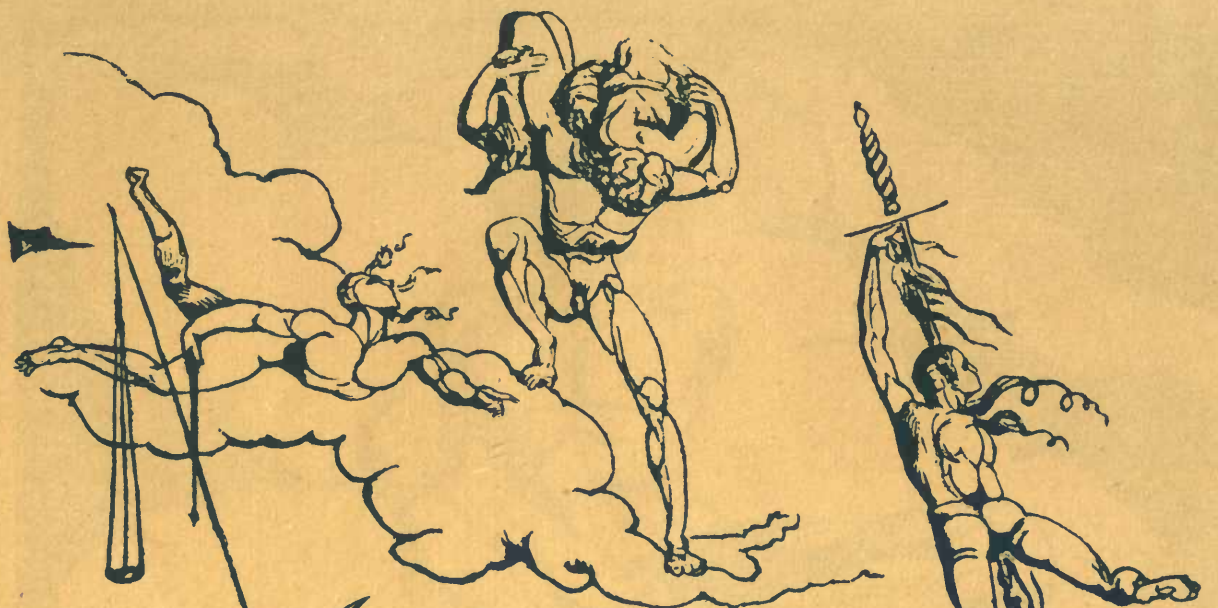


Solemn heave the Atlantic waves between the gloomy nations,  
Swelling, belching from its deeps red clouds & raging fires,  
Albion is sick America faints! enraged the Zenith grew,  
As human blood shooting its veins all round the arched heaven  
Red raise the clouds from the Atlantic in vast wheels of blood  
And in the red clouds rose a Wonder o'er the Atlantic sea;  
Intense 'naked' a Human fire fierce glowing, as the wedge  
Of iron heated in the furnace: his terrible limbs were fire  
With myriads of cloudy terrors banners dark & towers  
Surrounded; heat but not light went thro the murky atmo-  
-sphere



The King of England looking westward trembles at the <sup>vision</sup>

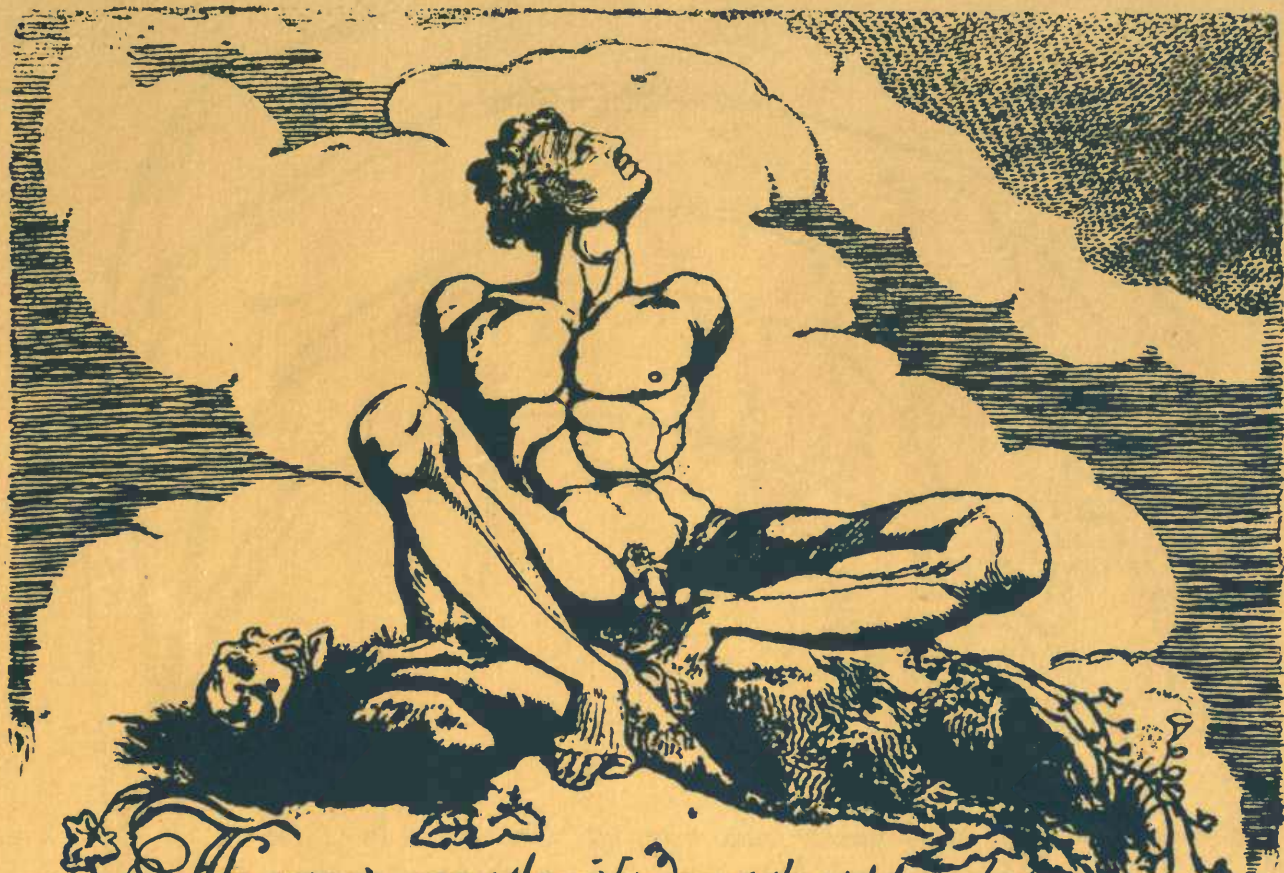




Albions Angel stood beside the Stone  
of night, and strew  
The terror like a comet, or more like the  
planet red  
That once includ'd the terrible wandering comets in its sphere.  
Then Mars thou wast our center, & the planets three flew round  
Thy crimson disk: so e'er the Sun was rent from thy red sphere;  
The Spectre glow'd his horrid length staining the temple long  
With beams of blood; & thus a voice came forth, and shook the  
temple








The morning comes, the night decays, the watchmen leave  
their stations;  
The grave is burst, the spices shed, the linen wrapped up;  
The bones of death, the covering clay, the sinews shrunk & dry'd.  
Reviving shake, inspiring move breathing, awakening,  
Spring like redeemed captives when their bonds & bars are burst;  
Let the slave grinding at the mill, run out into the field:  
Let him look up into the heavens & laugh in the bright air:  
Let the inchained soul shut up in darkness and in sighing,  
Whose face has never seen a smile in thirty weary years;

Rise and look out, his chains are loose, his dungeon doors are open.  
And let his wife and children return from the oppressors scourge,  
They look behind at every step & believe it is a dream.  
Singing, The Sun has left his blackness, & has found a fresher morning  
And the fair Moon rejoices in the clear & cloudless night;  
For Empire is no more, and now the Lion & Wolf shall cease..







*In thunders ends the voice Then Albions Angel wrathful burnt  
Beside the Stone of Night; and like the Eternal Lions howl  
In famine & war, replyd, Art thou not Ore, who serpent form'd  
Stands at the gate of Enitharion to devour her children;  
Blasphemous Demon, Antichrist, hater of Dignities:  
Lover of wild rebellion, and transgressor of Gods Law:  
Why dost thou come to Angels eyes in this terrific form?*



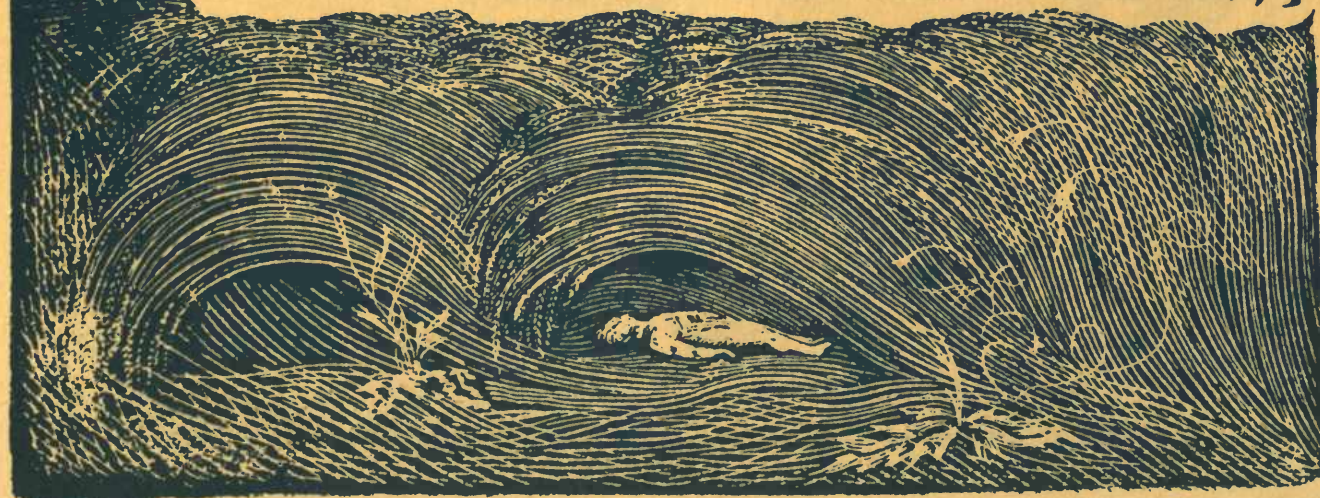




The terror answerd: I am Orc, wreath'd round the accursed tree:  
The times are ended: shadows pass the morning gins to break:  
The fiery joy, that Urizen perverted to ten commands,  
What night he led the starry hosts thro' the wide wilderness:  
That stony law I stamp to dust: and scatter religion abroad  
To the four winds as a torn book, & none shall gather the leaves  
But they shall rot on desert sands, & consume in bottomless deeps:  
To make the deserts blaspom, & the deeps shrink to their fountains:  
And to renew the fiery joy, and burst the stony roof.  
That pale religious lechery, seeking Virginity,  
May find it in a harlot, and in coarse-clad honesty  
The undefild tho' ravish'd in her cradle night and morn:  
For every thing that lives is holy, life delights in life:  
Because the soul of sweet delight can never be defild.  
Fires inwrap the earthly globe, yet man is not consumed:  
Amidst the lustful fires he walks: his feet become like brats,  
His knees and thighs like silver, & his breast and head like gold.



Sound! sound! my loud war trumpets & alarm my Thirteen Angels!  
Loud howls the eternal Wolf! the eternal Lion lashes his tail!  
America is darkned; and my punishing Demons terrified  
Crouch howling before their caverns deep like skins dry'd in the wind.  
They cannot smite the wheat, nor quench the furnels of the earth.  
They cannot smite with sorrows, nor subdue the plow and spade.  
They cannot wall the city, nor moat round the castle of princes.  
They cannot bring the stubbed oak to overgrow the hills.  
For terrible men stand on the shores, & in their robes I see  
Children take shelter from the lightnings, there stands Washington  
And Paine and Warren with their foreheads reard toward the east  
But clouds obscure my aged sight, A vision from afar!  
Sound! sound! my loud war trumpets & alarm my thirteen Angels;  
Ah vision from afar! Ah rebel form that rent the ancient  
Heavens, Eternal Viper self-renew'd, rolling in clouds  
I see thee in thick clouds and darknels on Americas shore,  
Writhing in pangs of abhorred birth, red flames the crest rebellious  
And eyes of death; the harlot womb oft opened in vain  
Heaves in enormous circles, now the times are return'd upon thee,  
Devourer of thy parent, now thy unutterable torment renews.  
Sound! sound! my loud war trumpets & alarm my thirteen Angels  
Ah terrible birth! a young one bursting! where is the weeping mouth  
And where the mothers milk? instead those ever-hisping jaws  
And parched lips drop with fresh gore; now roll thou in the clouds  
Thy mother lays her length outstretch'd upon the shore beneath.  
Sound! sound! my loud war trumpets & alarm my thirteen Angels!  
Loud howls the eternal Wolf; the eternal Lion lashes his tail!





Thus wept the Angel voice & as he wept the terrible blasts  
Of trumpets, blew a loud alarm across the Atlantic deep,  
No trumpets answer; no reply of clarions or of lutes,  
Silent the Colonies remain and refuse the loud alarm.

On those vast shady hills between America & Albions shore;  
Now barr'd out by the Atlantic sea: call'd Atlantean hills:  
Because from their bright summits you may pass to the Golden world  
An ancient palace, archetype of mighty Emperies,  
Rears its immortal pinnacles, built in the forest of God  
By Ariston the king of beauty for his stolen bride.

Here on their music seats the thirteen Angels sat perurb'd  
For clouds from the Atlantic hover o'er the solemn roof





Fierce the Angels rose, & as they rose deep thunder roll'd  
Around their shores: indignant burning with the fires of Ore  
And Boston's Angel cried aloud as they flew thro' the dark  
night.

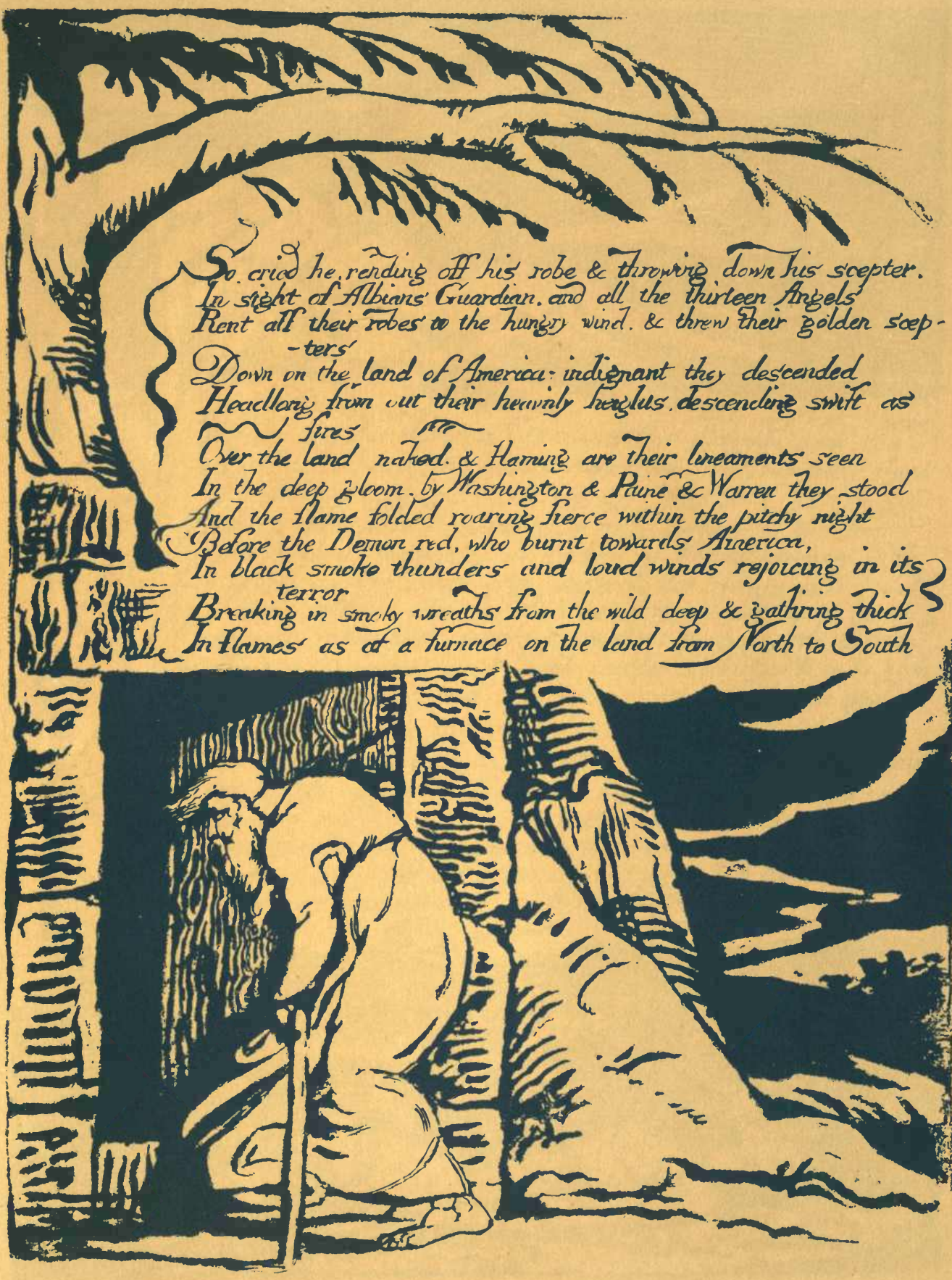


He cried: Why trembles honesty and like a murderer.  
Why seeks he refuge from the frowns of his immortal station?  
Must the generous tremble & leave his joy, to the idle: to  
the pestilence! That mock him? who commanded this? what God? what Angel?  
To keep the generous from experience till the ungenerous  
Are unrestrained performers of the energies of nature;  
Till pity is become a trade, and generosity a science.  
That men get rich by, & the sandy desert is giv'n to the strong  
What God is he, writes laws of peace, & clothes him in a tempest  
What pitying Angel lusts for tears, and fans himself with sighs  
What crawling villain preaches abstinence & wraps himself  
In fet of lambs? no more I follow, no more obedience pay.









So, cried he, rending off his robe & throwing down his scepter.  
In sight of Albion's Guardian, and all the thirteen Angels  
Rent all their robes to the hungry wind, & threw their golden scepters

Down on the land of America: indignant they descended  
Headlong from out their heavenly heights, descending swift as  
fires

Over the land naked, & flaming, and their lineaments seen  
In the deep gloom, by Washington & Paine & Warren they stood  
And the flame folded roaring fierce within the pitchy night  
Before the Demon red, who burnt towards America,

In black smoke thunders and loud winds rejoicing in its  
terror  
Breaking in smoky wreaths from the wild deep & gathering thick  
In flames as of a furnace on the land from North to South





What time the thirteen Governors that England sent con-  
In Bernard's house; the flames coverd the land, they rouse they  
Shaking their mental chains they rush in fury to the sea -  
To quench their anguish; at the feet of Washington down fall  
They grovel on the sand and writhing lie. while all  
The British soldiers thro' the thirteen states sent up a howl  
Of anguish; threw their swords & muskets to the earth & run  
From their encampments and dark castles seeking where to hide  
From the grim flames; and from the visions of Orc; in sight  
Of Albions Angel; who enrag'd his secret clouds open'd  
From north to south, and burst outstretch'd on wings of wrath covering  
The eastern sky, spreading his awful wings across the heavens;  
Beneath him roll'd his numerous hosts; all Albions Angels camp'd  
Darken'd the Atlantic mountains & their trumpets shook the valleys  
Armid with diseases of the earth to cast upon the Abyss;  
Their numbers forty millions, mustring in the eastern sky.





In the flames stood & view'd the armies drawn out in the sky,  
 Washington Franklin Paine & Warren Allen Gates & Lee: So  
 And heard the voice of Albion's Angel give the thunderous command,  
 His plagues obedient to his voice flew forth out of their clouds  
 Falling upon America, as a storm to cut them off  
 As a blight cuts the tender corn when it begins to appear.  
 Dark is the heaven above, & cold & hard the earth beneath;  
 And as a plague wind fill'd with insects cuts off man & beast;  
 And as a sea overwhelms a land in the day of an earthquake;

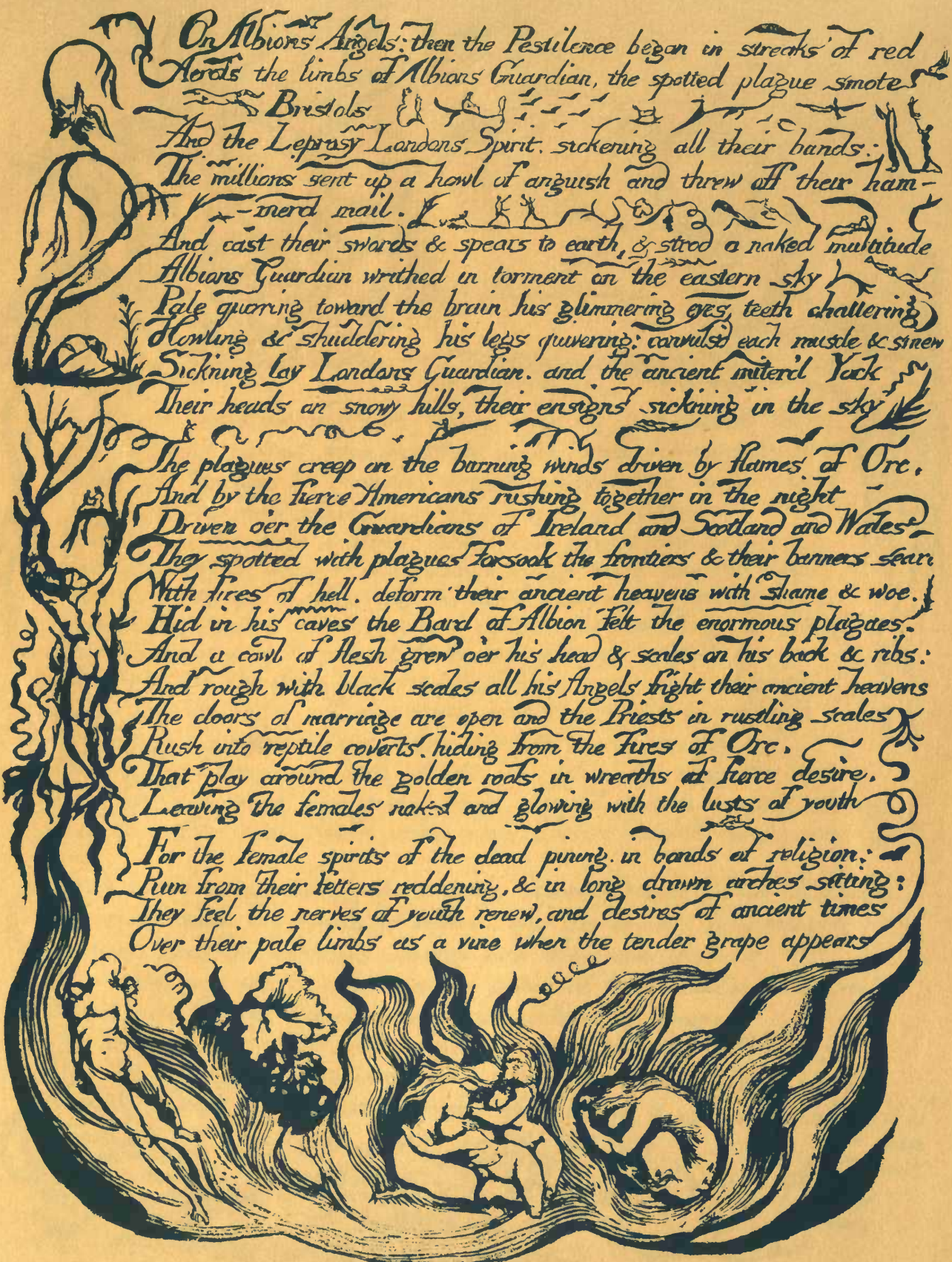


Fury! rage! madness! in a wind swept through America  
 And the red flames of Orc that fold'd roaring fierce around  
 The angry shores, and the fierce rushing of th' inhabitants together:  
 The citizens of New-York close their books & lock their chests:  
 The mariners of Boston drop their anchors and unlade:  
 The scribe of Pennsylvania casts his pen upon the earth:  
 The builder of Virginia throws his hammer down in fear.

Then had America been lost, overwhelm'd by the Atlantic,  
 And Earth had lost another portion of the infinite!  
 But all rush together in the night in wrath and raging fire  
 The red fires rag'd! the plagues recoild! then roll'd they back  
 with fury







On Albions Angels: then the Pestilence began in streaks of red  
Aerols the limbs of Albions Guardian, the spotted plague smote  
Bristols  
And the Leprasy Londons Spirit, sickening all their bands:  
The millions sent up a howl of anguish and threw off their ham-  
-merd mail.  
And cast their swords & spears to earth, & stood a naked multitude  
Albions Guardian writhed in torment on the eastern sky  
Pale quivering toward the brain his glimmering eyes, teeth chattering  
Howling & shuddering his legs quivering: convulsed each muscle & sinew  
Sickning lay Londons Guardian, and the ancient miseril Yock  
Their heads on snowy hills, their ensigns sickning in the sky  
The plagues creep on the burning winds driven by flames of Orc,  
And by the Fierre Americans rushing together in the night  
Driven oer the Guardians of Ireland and Scotland and Wales  
They spotted with plagues forsook the frontiers & their banners sear  
With fires of hell, deform their ancient heavens with shame & woe.  
Hid in his caves the Bard of Albion felt the enormous plagues.  
And a cowl of flesh grew oer his head & scales on his back & ribs:  
And rough with black scales all his Angels fight their ancient heavens  
The doors of marriage are open and the Priests in rustling scales  
Rush into reptile coverts, hiding from the Fires of Orc,  
That play around the golden rooks in wreaths of fierce desire,  
Leaving the females naked and glowing with the lusts of youth  
For the female spirits of the dead pining in bands of religion:  
Pun from their fetters reddening, & in long drawn arches sitting:  
They feel the nerves of youth renew, and desires of ancient times  
Over their pale limbs as a vine when the tender grape appears







Over the hills, the vales, the cities, rage the red flames fierce:  
 The Heavens melted from north to south: and Urizen who sat  
 Above all heavens in thunders wrap'd, emerg'd his leprous head,  
 From out his holy shrine, his tears in deluge piteous  
 Falling into the deep sublime: flaid with grey-brow'd snows  
 And thunderous visages, his jealous wings wav'd over the deep:  
 Weeping in dismal howling woe he dark descended howling  
 Around the smitten bands, clothed in tears & trembling shuddring cold.  
 His stored snows he pour'd forth, and his icy magazines  
 He open'd on the deep, and on the Atlantic sea white shivring.  
 Leprous his limbs, all over white, and hoary was his visage  
 Weeping in dismal howlings before the stern Americans  
 Hiding the Demon red with clouds & cold mists from the earth  
 Till Angels & weak men twelve years should govern o'er the strong;  
 And then their end should come, when France receiv'd the Demons light.

Stiff shudderings shook the heav'nly thrones! France Spain & Italy,  
 In terror view'd the bands of Albion, and the ancient Guardians  
 Fainting upon the elements, stricken with their own plagues  
 They slow advance to shut the five gates of their law-built heaven  
 Filled with blasting fancies and with mildews of despair  
 With fierce disease and lust, unable to stem the fires of Orc:  
 But the five gates were consumed, & their bolts and hinges melted  
 And the fierce flames burnt round the heavens, & round the abodes of  
 men









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