

# Little Lamb, Who Made Thee?

William Blake, 1789

Larry Nickel

Larghetto ♩ = 72

*p* *mp* *mf*

*pedal freely*

The piano introduction consists of three measures in 3/4 time. The right hand plays a series of chords, and the left hand plays a simple eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamics are marked *p*, *mp*, and *mf*.

5 **A** *mf* unison women *mp*

Lit - tle lamb, who made thee? w who made thee?

The first system shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment for the first line of the song. The vocal line is in a soprano clef and the piano accompaniment is in a grand staff. Dynamics are marked *mf* and *mp*.

9 *mf*

Gave thee liv' made thee feed, by the stream and o'er the mead;  
(meadow)

The second system shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment for the second line of the song. The vocal line is in a soprano clef and the piano accompaniment is in a grand staff. Dynamics are marked *mf*.

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13 *mp*

Gave thee cloth - ing of de - light, soft - est cloth - ing, wool - y, bright;

*p*

17 *mf*

Gave thee such a ten - der voice, mak - ing all e - joice?

*poco rit.*

*mp* *mf*

22 *a tempo*

who made thee? Do you know who made

*saa* *mf*

*mp*

poco rit.

poco rit.

Ped.

thee?

*8va*

**B**

*a tempo*

*mf*

*mp*

Lit - tle lamb, who made thee?

Do you know who made thee?

*mf*

Lit - tle lamb, who made thee?

Do you know who made thee?

*mp*

3

*p*

women tacet

Gave th

bade thee feed, by the stream and o'er the mead;

*mf*

Gave life and bade thee feed, by the stream and o'er the mead;

*mf*

Men only

39 *mp* unison

Gave thee cloth - ing of de-light, soft-est cloth - ing, wool - y, bright;

Gave thee cloth - ing of de-light, soft-est cloth - ing, v bright;

*pp*

(pedal freely)

43 *harmony*

Gave thee such a ten-der voice, mak-ing all re-joice?

Gave thee such a ten-der voice, mak- the vales re - joice?

*f*

*mf*

48

Lit - o made thee? Do you know \_\_\_\_\_ who made

Lit o lamb, who made thee? Do you know \_\_\_\_\_ who made \_\_\_\_\_

*mp*

*pp*

53

thee?

thee?

*espressivo - piano solo*

*pp* *p* *pp*

3

57

it.

tutti a cappella

*a tempo sostenuto*

62

**C** *mf*

Lit - tle tell thee; lit - tle lamb I'll tell thee:

*mf*

lamb, I'll tell thee; lit - tle lamb I'll tell thee:

*mp*

6

66

He is call - ed by thy name, for He calls Him-self a lamb. —

He is call - ed by thy name, for He calls Him-self a

70

*mp*

*mp*

He is meek and He is mild, .ame a lit - tle child;

He is meek and He is mild, He be - came a lit - tle child;

74

*f*

*saa*

*f*

I thee a Lamb, we are call - ed by his name — (by His name.) —

I a child and thee a Lamb, we are call - ed by his name — (by His name.) —

*tacit*

Lit - tle lamb, God bless thee. Lit - tle lamb (lit - tle lamb) God bless

Lit - tle lamb, God bless thee. Lit - tle lamb (lit - tle lamb) bless

thee. Lit - tle lamb, lit - tle who made thee?

thee. Lit - tle la e lamb, who made thee?

**Commentary:**

The poem is a child's question and answer. The first stanza is rural and descriptive, while the second focuses on the child's question and contains explanation and analogy.

The child's question is both naive and profound. The question ("who made thee?") is a simple one, and yet it taps into the deep and timeless questions that all human beings have, about their own origins and their place in the world. The poem's apostrophic form contributes to the effect of naiveté, since the situation of a child talking to a lamb is a believable one, and not simply a literary contrivance. Yet by answering his own question, the child converts the question into a rhetorical one, thus counteracting the initial spontaneous sense of the poem. The answer is presented as a puzzle, and even though it is an easy one—child's play—this also contributes to an underlying sense of ironic knowingness or artifice in the poem. The child's answer, however, reveals his confidence in his simple Christian faith and his innocent acceptance of its teachings.

The lamb of course symbolizes Jesus – the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. (John 1:29)  
The traditional image of Jesus as a lamb underscores the Christian values of gentleness, meekness, and peace.  
The image of the child is also associated with Jesus: in the Gospel, Jesus displays a special solicitude for children, and the Bible's depiction of Jesus in his childhood shows him as guileless and vulnerable.

These are also the characteristics from which the child-speaker approaches the ideas of nature and of God.  
This poem, like many of the "Songs of Innocence", accepts what Blake saw as the more positive aspects of conventional Christian belief.