

England 1914

Ralph McTell

Night stirs her inky finger in the water of the day,
The tired sun drops slowly in the sky.
And everywhere the gentle air hangs heavy with the day song
Evening calls the lamplight out to come
Children's wooden hoops go clattering down the street
Soon they're called inside, it's getting late.
The grand canal
Now splashed with red
Reflects on swallows wings.
The lamplighter knows the song the evening sings.
But the gas-lamps stand like soldiers
Hiss warnings to the wind
Their evening vespers prophecy a war.
The world divides
And men take sides
The spark bursts into flame
Nothing can be quite the same again.
Dog barks in the distance
Child cries in her sleep
Night waits for the dawn with baited breath.
The old school, the old rule
Rung out on a muffinman's bell
The lamplighter has made his nightly call.
Dreams of hope and peace
Sent clattering down the streets
Empty like the promises they made.
The wars rage on, and different wrongs
Will someone please explain
That peace is not the lamplighter
'Cause he's not coming back again

Songwriters

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