

For today's poem, we go back to 1599, when a play by THOMAS DEKKER called 'Patient Grissel' was produced. The play contained a lullaby (a song you sing to get a baby to sleep) which went like this:



## LULLABY

Golden slumbers kiss your eyes,  
Smiles awake you when you rise.  
Sleep, pretty wantons, do not cry,  
And I will sing a lullaby:  
Rock them, rock them, lullaby.

Care is heavy, therefore sleep you;  
You are care, and care must keep you.  
Sleep, pretty wantons, do not cry,  
And I will sing a lullaby:  
Rock them, rock them, lullaby.

I hope that poem sounds familiar, because some of its lines were used by PAUL McCARTNEY in his song 'GOLDEN SLUMBERS', in 1969 - 370 years after Dekker's play came out: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AcQjM7gV6mI>

If you listen to the song, Paul McCartney made two changes to Dekker's lines. He changed 'Sleep, pretty wantons, do not cry' to 'Sleep, pretty darling, do not cry' - and it's pretty obvious why that is. 'Wanton' is a pretty old-fashioned term meaning 'Doing whatever you want' - and children are sometimes called 'wanton' because they often just do whatever they want and have to be told what to do. But the other change was that he changed 'Golden slumbers kiss your eyes' to 'Golden slumbers fill your eyes'. Why did he do that? Both words are one syllable (pronounced 'sill - a - bull', and meaning one unit of sound) and both have an 'i' as their vowel. Maybe he just forgot the line and thought the original said 'fill'. But if he did change it deliberately, it would be interesting to know why.



When he wrote those lines in 1599, Dekker could have had no idea that they would become so famous. Which just goes to show you - you never know what effect your actions will have on the future. So don't be a wanton and always do good things, so if your actions do have an effect on the future, it will be a good effect.