

Name: _____ Class: _____

The Tyger

By William Blake
1794

William Blake (1757-1827) was an English poet during the Romantic era who wrote extensively about God, nature, and the beauty of the human imagination. "The Tiger," published alongside another poem called "The Lamb" in Blake's poetry collection Songs of Experience, is one of the most anthologized poems in English. As you read, take notes on how the poem discusses the human condition and the question of existence.

[1] Tyger Tyger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

[5] In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand, dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art
[10] Could twist the sinews¹ of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
[15] What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp!

When the stars threw down their spears
And water'd heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see?
[20] Did he who made the Lamb² make thee?

Tyger tyger burning bright
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?



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1. **Sinew (noun):** a tendon or ligament uniting muscle to bone or bone to bone
2. In Christianity, the lamb is often a symbol for Jesus Christ. William Blake also has another poem in Songs of Experience titled "The Lamb."