

The Tyger and the Lamb

By William Blake

From *Songs of Innocence and Experience Shewing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul* (1789)

Originally published with illustrations (as a sort of comic book) these poems are from two sections, the lamb from *Innocence*, the Tyger from *Experience*. Blake uses the short, simple, lyrical poems to make commentary on his contemporary society. Specifically we will be looking at the problem of Evil and how it arises in these poems.

"The Lamb"

from *Songs of Innocence*

Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee
Gave thee life & bid thee feed.
By the stream & o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing wooly bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice:
Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee
Little Lamb I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb I'll tell thee:
He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb:
He is meek & he is mild,
He became a little child:
I a child & thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.
Little Lamb God bless thee.
Little Lamb God bless thee.

"The Tyger"

from *Songs of Experience*

Tyger Tyger. burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?
In what distant deeps or skies.
Burnt the fire of thine eyes!
On what wings dare he aspire!
What the hand, dare sieze the fire?
And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews 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?
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?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?
Tyger, Tyger burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?