

# *A Poison Tree*

**William Blake**

I was angry with my friend:  
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.  
I was angry with my foe:  
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I water'd it in fears,  
Night and morning with my tears;  
And I sunnéd it with smiles,  
And with soft deceitful wiles<sup>1</sup>.

And it grew both day and night,  
Till it bore an apple bright;  
And my foe beheld it shine,  
And he knew that it was mine,

And into my garden stole,  
When the night had veil'd the pole<sup>2</sup>.:  
In the morning glad I see  
My foe outstretch'd beneath the tree.

1. wiles: trickery, ruse, deceit
2. pole: (possibly) the Pole Star: a very bright star used for navigation  
“veil’d the pole”—really dark

## **About the Related Reading**

### **William Blake**

(1757-1827)  
was a major poet and one of England's finest visual artists. Nearly all of Blake's poetry focuses on humanity's alternative states of innocence and experience. "A Poison Tree" was published in 1794.

Read the poem, which also deals with the poisonous nature of feuding. How are the messages of the poem and “The Interlopers” similar? Compare the two. Also, describe how the endings of the two works are different.