

1819

**WHY DID I LAUGH TO-NIGHT? NO VOICE WILL
TELL**

John Keats

Keats, John (1795-1821) - Widely regarded as the most talented of the English romantic poets, Keats, whose work was poorly received during his lifetime, could not have foreseen his later recognition. Ironically, he wrote for his own epitaph: "Here lies one whose name was writ in water." Why did I laugh to-night? No voice will tell (1819) - Opening lines: Why did I laugh to-night? No voice will tell: / No God, no Demon of severe response, ...

WHY DID I LAUGH TONIGHT

Why did I laugh to-night? No voice will tell:
No God, no Demon of severe response,
Deigns to reply from Heaven or from Hell.
Then to my human heart I turn at once.
Heart! Thou and I are here sad and alone;
I say, why did I laugh! O mortal pain!
O Darkness! Darkness! ever must I moan,
To question Heaven and Hell and Heart in vain.
Why did I laugh? I know this Being's lease,
My fancy to its utmost blisses spreads;
Yet would I on this very midnight cease,
And the world's gaudy ensigns see in shreds.
Verse, Fame, and Beauty are intense indeed,
But Death intenser- Death is Life's high meed.

THE END