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bane  (bān)

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n.

1.

a. A cause of harm, ruin, or death: "*Obedience, / Bane of all genius, virtue, freedom, truth, / Makes slaves of men*" (Percy Bysshe Shelley).

b. A source of persistent annoyance or exasperation: "*The spellings of foreign names are often the bane of busy copy editors*" (Norm Goldstein).

2. Archaic

a. Fatal injury or ruin: "*Hath some fond lover tic'd thee to thy bane?*" (George Herbert).

b. A deadly poison.

[Middle English, destroyer, from Old English *bana*; see **g^when-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.](#)]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

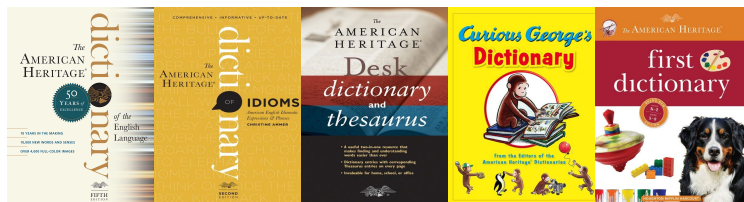
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[Indo-European Roots](#)

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The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European Roots](#).

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