

Dylan Thomas

Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night

Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,
Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

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Stefanie Wortman 1/22/2016 8:28 AM

Comment [1]: Throughout the poem, Thomas associates words that have positive connotations (gentle, good) with death and words that have negative connotations (burn, rave, rage) with the desire to live.

Stefanie Wortman 1/22/2016 8:29 AM

Comment [2]: The villanelle form does not dictate any specific rhythm, only the pattern of repetition. For this villanelle, Thomas uses iambic pentameter.

Stefanie Wortman 1/22/2016 8:29 AM

Comment [3]: The refrains take on different meaning over the course of the poem, sometimes functioning as commands and sometimes completing a declarative sentence about how men act at the end of their lives.

Stefanie Wortman 1/22/2016 8:30 AM

Comment [4]: In each stanza, Thomas focuses on a different kind of person: "wise men," "Good men," "Wild men," and "Grave men." Though they have lived their lives differently, each finds something to regret in his past and clings to the time that remains.