

## Going Deep into Dylan Thomas's Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night

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"Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" is one of Dylan Thomas's famous poems. With a strict form, the poem shows Thomas's excellent writing skills. However, after reading it for several times, we would find that there are some more inner thoughts and metaphors than we first expected; we would gradually feel Thomas's oppressed but strong emotions toward life when facing his father's serious illness.

On the external aspect, "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" is written in a restricted structure called "villanelle," which has six stanzas including five tercets and one quatrain. The poem has just two rhymes, and in the former five tercets, each stanza's first and third line rhyme with each other; in the last quatrain, the first, third, and fourth line rhyme with one another (a-b-a in first five stanzas; a-b-a-a in the last one). Besides, we can easily see the poem's repetition of the two selected lines, "Do not go gentle into that good night" and "Rage, rage against the dying of the light." This perfect structure shows us Dylan Thomas's talent in composing poems.

Aside from the external structure, we can also feel the deep and complex emotions conveyed through the restricted form. According to most of the information I get, this thought-provoking poem by Thomas is written to express his feeling toward his dying father suffering from final illness. In the first stanza, we can see obviously that Thomas did not want his father, who was suffering from pain and sadness, to die. "Old age should burn and rave at close of day" just implies that Thomas wanted his father, who was at an old age, to fight against death (close of day). In the poem, to encourage his father, it says that no matter wise men, good men, wild men, or grave men people are, they "do not go gentle into that good night," and they "rage, rage against the dying of the light." As for the repeated lines, they are considered to urge his father not to resignedly accept death. In the last stanza, we can also feel his helplessness of his father's suffering; thus he could just pray for God's help. The restricted structure just can be the contrast and highlights the deep sorrow in Thomas mind; and his strong sadness seems to overflow the constrained language. It is really a touching work that contains strong love for his father.

Moreover, as I read it again and again, I think maybe Thomas not only wanted to express his feelings to his father but also wanted to convey the attitude toward life. The restricted structure is like the restriction of our life. We may feel oppressed and helpless of our life, but Thomas tells us his idea that we cannot be resigned to the destiny. All kinds of men he mentions will not easily yield to death. Even grave men who are near death will fight against it, and with a glimmer of hope, their "blind eyes

could blaze like meteor and be gay.”

“Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night” is really a profound poem. Every time I read it, I can dig out more thoughts in my mind and feel much stronger emotions from Dylan Thomas.

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.