

1 swansea, wales. his  
father david john  
thomas



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Dylan Marlais Thomas is considered one of the greatest modern poets. Like many other writers and poets, Thomas lived a life of loss, poverty, and adventure. His life began October 27, 1914 in Swansea, Wales. His father David John Thomas was an English Literature teacher at the Swansea Grammar School and at Dylan's birth he was determined for his son to become the poet that he had failed to be (Fitzgibbon 25).

Despite having very little education, Thomas began writing poems at the very young age of nine. At age sixteen Thomas left school and began working at the South Wales Daily Post, sometimes writing scornful reviews of local plays, concerts, and writers; which were often edited to keep from offending the subjects he scrutinized. In 1937, after going on many drinking binges and living together for over a year, Thomas married Caitlin MacNamara, with whom he later had three children. In April of 1937, Thomas began to read poetry for BBC Wales. Radio broadcasting became a big role in his career development. Thomas is credited for many publications, including his most famous, "Do Not Go Gentle into That Goodnight" and "Under Milk Wood". Tragically, during his fourth visit to the United States, Dylan Thomas fell into a coma, due to an overdose of Tequila and Morphine shots.

On November 9, 1953, he died at St. Vincent's Hospital while a nurse was bathing him; he was thirty-nine (Neurotic Poets 6). Thomas has been described as, "humble, shy, confused, and insecure on the inside, but outwardly neglectful, selfish, and egotistical - yet always, and extremely, charming" (Neurotic Poets). Though Thomas led an interesting life; even more interesting is his style of writing. Even though Thomas' works are puzzles to most people, Thomas believed "what the words stood for,

symbolised, or meant was of verysecondary importance-what mattered was the very sound of them”( NeuroticPoets 1). Thomas believed that the best poetry was music to the ears.

Thomas used life experiences and Biblical passages to create the musicalsounds in his poetry. One of Thomas’ most famous poems is ” Do Not Go Gentle into That GoodNight”. Thomas had a very close relationship with his father David JohnThomas. On December 16, 1952, his ailing father died while holding hishand( Neurotic Poets 5). This poem is very much about the struggle betweenThomas’ father and death. The poem reads: Do not go gentle into that goodnight, Old age should burn and rave at close of day; Rage, rage against the dying of thelight. Though wise men at their end knowdark is right, Because their words had forked nolightening theyDo not go gentle into that goodnight. Good men, the last wave by, cryinghow brightTheir frail deeds might have dancedin a green bay, Rage, rage against the dying of thelight.

Wild men who caught and sang the sunin flight, And learn, too late, they grieved iton its way, Do not go gentle into that goodnight. Grave men, near death, who see withblinding sight, Blind eyes blaze like meteors and begay, Rage, rage against the dying of thelight. 3And you, my father, there on that sadheight, Curse, bless, me now with your fiercetears, I pray. Do not go gentle into that good night. Rage, rage against the dying of thelight.

(Grimes)Thomas’ father had been a militant man most of his life, and when becameblind and weak from illness, his son was disturbed seeing his fatherbecome “ soft” or” gentle.” In the poem, Thomas is moving his father

to go back to being the fierce man he had previously been (Grimes 1). The "sad height" is a time when life is ending and death can be seen as inevitable.

Thomas rages his father to rage against the old and dying life; at the same time the "sad height" is the only moment the only moment that he can ask his father to bless him (Westphal 1). Thomas also used an abundance of biblical language in his poetry. We can also look at "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" for Thomas' use of biblical language. Thomas often turned to the Bible for imagery and illusion in his poetry. For instance, "the sad height" is much like Mount Nebo where Moses died because he could not enter the promised land. The origin of lines 16 and 17 is clearly the book of Deuteronomy. For example the relationship between Moses and his