

The two gentle villanelles which appear next (“Nice and Slow” and “Free”) have one thing in common besides form: They are not threatening to students of poetry. Each expresses specific characteristics of a fictional person. Each portrays the tendencies of a fictional character to whom many can relate.

Do not let the simplicity of the lines lead you to the conclusion that the characters they represent are uncomplicated. There is much to be read into the words of the various lines, as well as the punctuation marks and other idiosyncrasies. A villanelle projects strength and determination in its pleadings and its declarations.

Behold these two poems. One reflects my own nature and approach to writing poetry perhaps more accurately than the other. I leave it up to you to decide which one. (Though each reaches out from the world of fiction, as any insightful reader knows, there is a degree of autobiography in every work of literature. How could there not be?)